

ORIGINAL LETTERS,

DRAMATIC PIECES,

AND

O E M S.

---

By BENJAMIN VICTOR.

---

IN THREE VOLUMES.

---

V O L. II.

---

---

L O N D O N:

and for T. BECKET, the Corner of the Adelphi in  
the Strand.

MDCCCLXXVI.

ORIGINAL LETTERS

DRAMATIC PIECES

AND

O E M S

BENJAMIN VICTOR

THREE VOLUMES

VOLUME

OF

THE

THE



ALTAMIRA:

A

TRAGEDY.

VOL. II.

ALMA T

Y. E. D. A. R.

11 107

---

---

## ADVERTISEMENT.

**T**HIS Tragedy was my first attempt in the Drama, and was written above fifty years ago—About that time, I met with a volume of letters, call'd Philander to Silvia, wrote by Mrs. Manley, on the remarkable subject of the unhappy fate of Lord Grey, who married the eldest daughter of Earl Berkley, and fell passionately in love with the youngest, and she with him—which soon became so notorious as to end in a trial at the Old Bailey, and is printed among the state trials of those times. Those letters were written with so much spirit and passion, as to seduce me to attempt forming a plan for a Tragedy, on that subject—but as the Silvia, there drawn, appeared to court her ruin by so violent, and so unguarded a passion, I had judgment enough, even then, to think she could by no means be a fit subject for the stage—I, therefore, only took the hint of her unhappy situation for my Altamira, and was obliged to a similar story

in the History of Italy, between the ducal houses of Milan and Bologna.

When I was introduced to the acquaintance of Mr. Booth, in the year 1728, just after his ill health confin'd him from the stage, I shewed him a copy of this Tragedy, and he was so much pleased with the love scenes, that he wrote a letter to Aaron Hill, Esq. with whom he then corresponded, to look over my manuscript, and correct it for the stage—Mr. Hill, whose avowed friendship for me, wanted no advocate for my service, immediately complied with Mr. Booth's request; but as that gentleman unfortunately mistook the chief grievance in my plan, viz. The unhappy situation of the sisters, he rather aggravated the objection, instead of removing it; and the only good alteration he made, was in the character of the intended husband for Altamira, which I had drawn a worthy young nobleman, by introducing the vain, singular character of *Gonsalvo*, which is indeed a fine contrast to *Bellarion*. Soon after it was ordered, by the managers, into rehearsal, but after two or three rehearsals a conspiracy broke out, and almost all the company of any consequence deserted (none being then in articles) and went off directly to the French Theatre

in

in the Hay-market, which was privately prepared, where they remained the best part of that winter, 'till Mr. Fleetwood purchased the whole patent, which brought them all back to their old station.

Thus the unhappy Altamira was laid on the shelf, 'till the summer 1766, when I had the honour to be invited by a noble Lord, of the first distinction, to his country seat—during the happy month of my residence there, I had leisure to revise, and write a fair copy of this Tragedy—to present his Lordship with every act as I finish'd it, and had the pleasure of exciting his curiosity to read the last act with impatience, which did not fail to obtain his warmest approbation: But, perhaps, his Lordship's politeness, and partiality to me, disarmed him as a critic, and induced him to offer me his patronage, by introducing it to Mr. Garrick, though I informed his Lordship of the objections that manager had long since made to the fable—but there I entered my caveat, well knowing if a manager of a Theatre has not abilities to be a judge of Dramatic Writings, he is totally unfit for that office; and if he has, no interest should prevail on him to suffer any piece to appear before the Public, against his judgment.

I can



I can safely affirm more than 500 persons have read this Tragedy, in the compass of fifty years; and though 490 favour'd it with their approbation, yet the very few true judges, with my much esteemed friend, Mr. Garrick, at the head of them, have insisted there is an unhappiness in the *fable*, that would not fail to give umbrage to an English audience. After this fair account, the ill-fated Altamira is now humbly submitted to the candid Reader.

B. V.

Dramatis

# Dramatis Personæ.

## M E N.

BELFORT, General of the Duke of Bologna.

EUGENIO, his Friend.

BELLARIO, Son to BENTIVOGLIO, Duke of  
Bologna.

GONSALVO, Heir to the Duke of Milan.

BERNARDO, Captain of the Guard to  
BENTIVOGLIO.

## W O M E N.

ALTAMIRA, }  
LUCIDORA. } Daughters to BELFORT.

Guards and Attendants.

SCENE, *The House and Gardens of BELFORT,  
in Bologna.*

Thematic Form

1. 1. 1.

1. 1. 1.

1. 1. 1.

1. 1. 1.

1. 1. 1.

W. O. M. N.

1. 1. 1.

1. 1. 1.

1. 1. 1.

1. 1. 1.

## A C T II.

SCENE, *A Hall in BELFORT's-House.*

BELFORT and BELLARIO, *meeting.*

BELFORT.

GOOD-morrow, brave Bellario! what a night  
Was last? From what a depth of misery,  
To what an height of transport hast thou rais'd me!  
Thou, like a god, hast form'd new passions in me,  
Given me my child from death! and on despair,  
Stamp'd, at a heat, the golden face of joy!

BELLARIO.

To make you happy was to bless mankind;  
The public felt your sorrows.—

BELFORT.

Altamira

Has excellence, that claim'd uncommon love;  
Never did that majestic soul of greatness,  
Which swell'd the glories of immortal Rome,

VOL. II.

C

Inspire

Inspire a nobler bosom!---what prudent caution,  
 To give report full credit, that she died  
 In passing Po's rude torrent? Roman Virgins,  
 And Roman Wives, have fallen by their own hands,  
 To save a husband's or a lover's life——  
 My Altamira found it nobler far,  
 To live a willing sufferer, than die  
 To shun the lot her brighter virtue chose.

## BELLARIO.

Wou'd you had seen with what reluctant sweetness  
 The modest trembler seem'd to mourn her safety,  
 When her recover'd spirits rais'd her eyes  
 To look at her deliverer! In vain  
 I tried a thousand arts to tempt her back;  
 But every fruitless plea persuasion form'd,  
 Were showers against wind! 'till happily  
 Some pitying angel whisper'd to my mind,  
 Remembrance of the woes her father felt,  
 From her imagin'd death---This, when she heard,  
 The raging torrent gushing from her eyes,  
 Bore resolution down! Take me, she cried,  
 Unworthy murderess of so lov'd a father——  
 Restore me to his blessing, ill deserv'd,  
 And save me from abhorrence of myself.

## BELFORT.

Oh! she was given me to convince ambition,  
 That greatness cannot charm, like home-felt joy:  
 In her first infancy, when she but smil'd,

The



The childish innocence has reach'd my soul;  
 And when the pratt'ling music tun'd her tongue,  
 Believe me, my Bellario, all the fives,  
 Flutes, trumpets, and inspiring sounds of war,  
 Touch'd not with livelier transport.

BELLARIO.

Yet, my Lord,  
 This angel-charmer, awful as she shines,  
 Inspir'd no reverence in the proud Gonsalvo;  
 Nor taught his vanity, how much above  
 The haughty hopes of an aspiring captive,  
 Her innate worth has plac'd her.

BELFORT.

Speak that plainly——  
 What want of reverence shew'd he?

BELLARIO.

Why he dar'd,  
 Even in my camp, to tell her, that he lov'd her.

BELFORT.

Lov'd Altamira! no, it was her sister:  
 Did he not seize the Duke, by base surprize,  
 And, unproclaim'd, commence revengeful war,  
 And all, because your father's fix'd resolve  
 Robb'd him of Lucidora!

BELLARIO.

He did---he did——  
 And, by my soul, such contradiction reigns  
 In his malignant breast, that, tho' 'tis true,

C 2

That

That Altamira's worth might fire the world,  
 I think, he feigns his passion, but in view  
 To be reveng'd on me! The vanquish'd envier,  
 Wou'd tempt her to forget Bellario sav'd her!

BELFORT.

Ha!--have a care young man! forget Bellario!  
 Remember Lucidora!—

BELLARIO.

What have I said  
 That cou'd deserve to call that sudden cloud  
 Upon the brow of Belfort?

BELFORT.

No more---be warn'd!  
 Guard your light heart from wishes, frail and fatal:  
 I can look thro' you, and distinguish passions;  
 Your anger grows from jealousy. Remember  
 Your heart, and hand, are Lucidora's claim:  
 Bring not dishonour on your line's restorer;  
 Scorn to wish basely.---Altamira, safe  
 In her own virtue, cannot doubt Bellario's;  
 But I, who know you amorous and gay,  
 Dread nature, against reason.

BELLARIO.

Never, never—  
 Rather than wish a wrong to Altamira,  
 Let shame, affliction, cowardice, and want,  
 Pursue me to destruction; wring my heart  
 With everlasting pain, avenging heaven!

If

If I not prize her peace, and Belfort's honour,  
Beyond all weak description——

BELFORT.

'Tis enough.

I fear'd not your intention ; but in love  
The heart is a deceiver ; and, unguarded,  
Slides into guilt unpurpos'd ! Generous minds  
Are safe, when not surpris'd ; now I have warn'd you,  
Suspicion were a baseness.

*Enter* ALTAMIRA.

ALTAMIRA.

But that Bellario  
Has good excuse to plead while here engag'd,  
(For who wou'd wish him happier than with you)  
I brought him a reproach—My sister wanders  
Neglected in the garden, where he promis'd  
To please her with the story of his wars ;  
She waits with all a lover's fond impatience.—

BELFORT.

Fie, fie, Bellario—let not me detain you —  
I know the woman's rule—he, they love most  
Is blameless—all the accusation lies  
Against his bad companions.—

*(Exit Bellario.)*

Altamira,

How dear I hold you, is, I think, no secret,  
And yet not fully known—for 'till last night,

I never knew myself, to what excess ;  
 'Tis in your power to give me joy and sorrow ;  
 Inform me—for your own heart disdains  
 A thought that shuns discovery—what has pass'd  
 'Twixt you and young Gonsalvo ?

ALTAMIRA.

When made a Captive,  
 Tho' by his conqueror courted to be gay ;  
 At first, with fullen air, and rough deportment,  
 He shun'd propos'd society—'till chang'd  
 At once, and starting into strange delight,  
 He tortur'd me with vows of new-born passion :  
 To gain a heart like mine, he said, wou'd recompence  
 Lost freedom, with an empire worth the world ;  
 The captive Duke might now return at pleasure,  
 The towns surpriz'd shou'd be restor'd—the war  
 With all its waste atton'd at my decision,  
 And Milan's future peace attend my will.

BELFORT.

Seem'd this in earnest ? or amusing lightness—  
 The wanton courtship of a young man's gallantry ?

ALTAMIRA.

I want the skill to judge of what is truth,  
 And what is art in man : but had I heard  
 Those words address'd to any other maid,  
 And seen th' impassion'd looks with which he  
 spoke 'em,

I should have thought that love alone had mov'd him,

BELFORT.

BELFORT.

Shou'd it be love---have you yet ask'd your heart,  
What welcome it wou'd give him?

ALTAMIRA.

Never, Sir.

His image, and my heart, hold no relation---  
My eyes reject him---and my reason shuns him---  
I hate him---for he is your enemy---  
And every quality that marks Gonfhalvo,  
Is odious to my nature---Rash, revengeful,  
Fantastic, full of words---a self-esteeming---  
Coarse in his manners---blind to his own weakness,  
And every other's virtues---proud without merit---

BELFORT.

Why, thou hast drawn the picture of a Thing  
Form'd to undo thy sex! the very soul  
Of modern fashion---and a woman's wish---  
Yet, wou'd I not, if this, in truth, were like him,  
For ten such dukedoms, match thy worth so ill:  
I fear thou wrong'st him---first impressions oft  
Deceive our judgement: Think what general good  
Bologna might receive from this alliance;  
That Altamira, who made wretchedness  
Her choice, and vanquish'd love, to save the state,  
Will never shun to sacrifice her taste,  
When that which pains herself, protects her country!

ALTAMIRA.

In every thing, devoted to your choice,  
I have no will, but yours:---yet when my father,



In punishment of Altamira's crimes,  
Thinks fit to bid her live for that Gonfhalvo,  
I hope, it will be no offence to die.

BELFORT.

No more—I wou'd not give thee pain—my heart  
Wou'd share too deeply with thee.

*Enter* EUGENIO.

EUGENIO.

It pleases me to see my friend in smiles.  
See, Altamira, what a change you make?  
—But I have serious news—a letter here  
Is brought me from my brother in the camp,  
That, by our Duke's command, Gonfhalvo comes  
His own ambassador, that with Bellario,  
You, and Bernardo, who attend him hither,  
(Bernardo, whom I hate, who loves not Belfort)  
May treat on some new offers made the Duke,  
Which have obtain'd his favour.

BELFORT.

Said he when  
Gonfhalvo wou'd arrive?

EUGENIO.

The messenger  
Who brought my letter, came among his guards,  
And he's already here.

ALTAMIRA.

ALTAMIRA.

With your permission,  
I will inform Bellario and my sister.

BELFORT.

No, Altamira, stay;  
Shou'd there be found a reason for your absence,  
You shall not want a signal.

*Enter GONSALVO and BERNARDO.*

BERNARDO.

Illustrious Lord!  
Commission'd by our sovereign Bentivoglio,  
I guide the heir of Milan to your presence;  
Upon whose approbation of his offers,  
Depends our Duke's wish'd freedom, and the peace  
Of half fair Italy.

BELFORT.

If on my will  
That great dependance lies, 'tis fix'd already:  
I cou'd have wish'd, young prince, we might have met  
As we have met before, with no sharp sense  
Of wrongs, and outrage, to give memory pain:  
But if the will that caus'd those crimes, is past,  
Be their effects forgotten.

GONSALVO.

I have forgot 'em.  
For since I saw my faults in those bright eyes,  
I wish'd them uncommitted. You, my Lord,  
Are fam'd for valour, and for justice known,  
Judge

Judge you Gonsalvo's cause — You boast two daughters ;

I had some right to think the youngest mine,  
But woman is a blessing hardly held  
Where not inclin'd to tarry — 'Tis in vain  
To trace a line of long particulars  
Of what I suffer'd, how reveng'd my sufferings!  
For Lucidora lost — I offer thus :  
Your Duke now free, be Altamira mine ;  
And Milan and Bologna, knit like us  
In the close knot of love, unite for ever.

EUGENIO, (*aside to Altamira.*)

Concisely stated — All the task is over ;  
He has his own consent, and yours he doubts not.

ALTAMIRA. (*aside to Eugenio.*)

May I begone, my Lord ?

EUGENIO.

Not 'till the signal.

BELFORT.

You cannot, suddenly, receive fit answer  
To offers of this unexpected weight :  
In consult with these Lords, and with Bellario,  
Due reverence shall be paid the Duke's commands :  
Meantime, my daughter's voice yourself may ask ;  
With whom a while we leave you.

(*Exeunt Belfort, Eugenio, and Bernardo.*)

GONSALVO.

GONSALVO.

Then I am blest——

'Twere fear beneath the fame of Altamira,  
To question her concurrence---nay, no vanity---  
My faith is founded on a firmer claim  
Than my own merits---You, as wise as lovely,  
Weighing yourself against Bologna's hopes,  
Will find your scale far lighter than Gonsalvo  
Is taught by love to think it---for were I  
To judge the counterpoise, empires and glories,  
The peace of nations, and the wealth of worlds,  
Wou'd weigh like feathers against Altamira!

ALTAMIRA.

Unless Gonsalvo judg'd a woman lighter  
Than those fine feathers he adorns his speech with,  
How cou'd he dare commit this outrage on me?  
Am I so cheap a purchase, that no time,  
No form, no reverence shou'd be wasted on me—  
Where have you learnt to treat for woman's hearts  
As rudely as for ransom?—She whose sense  
Wants delicacy to discern that tenderness  
Which well becomes true lovers, well deserves  
The rudeness she invites to scorn her beauty.

GONSALVO.

I know not what a man of woman's making  
May feel—but nature mix'd no fear with love—  
This reverence—this respect—this tenderness—

Have

Have all the self same meaning with Gonsalvo:  
 My wishes are more warm, and thence less wordy;  
 We soldiers when we love, speak out—we love—  
 Nor whine your amorous ditties——Curse on  
 the fools,

Who first penn'd soft romances! Natural passion,  
 'Till those sick fancies had deprav'd your taste,  
 Found passage to your heart—but since wild dreams  
 Of weeping madrigals, and dying damons,  
 Misguided expectation—manly truth  
 Is constru'd as contempt; and none but he  
 Who impudently swears you are all goddesses,  
 Shall find you to be women—turn not away—  
 May victory ever fly me as of late,  
 And make a love-sick sigher of Gonsalvo,  
 If he not doats upon your charms, as fondly—  
 As sincere, as if his thoughts were dress'd  
 In pleasing, but unmanly eloquence——

ALTAMIRA.

Hear me, Gonsalvo——  
 Will it become the wisdom you wou'd boast,  
 To chuse a wife, whose most distinguish'd quality  
 Must be aversion to the man who weds her?

GONSALVO.

Umph!----wisdom! yes----why not become my  
 wisdom?

'Tis prudent to be fashionable! Good heaven  
 Forbid, that every man his wife hates heartily,  
 Shou'd



Shou'd be thought silly for it! I have courage—  
Call it my vanity—spite of this warning,  
To venture on the trial.—When you find  
With what a warmth I prove the love I speak not,  
Your gratitude will make up my defects,  
And I shall learn to please you.

ALTAMIRA.

Now by my hopes,  
Were death, or such a lover as Gonsalvo,  
Decreed to be my choice, thus wou'd I turn  
Abhorrent, from the hatefulness of life,  
And chuse the milder horror.

GONSALVO.

Death and  
Are rivals of most unconcurring talents—  
He, cold and comfortless—I warm and raptur'd—  
He, making no distinction 'twixt plain woman  
And lovely Altamira! I, adoring  
The sprightly contradiction of your nature,  
And doting on the scorn that wou'd provoke me—  
Let me be doom'd to die like a sick sinner,  
If I not prize you doubly, for the pains  
I find you are to cost me—your kind mistress  
That takes no state upon her, but speaks faintly  
And softly, fears you flatter her, palls passion,  
As who should say, I know myself too well  
To put you to the pain of long pursuing.—

ALTAMIRA.

ALTAMIRA.

Fortune, at last, proves kind—Bernardo comes—  
And I will snatch with joy the happy moment.

(Exit.

*Enter* BERNARDO.

BERNARDO.

What, are your stars unkind? can gay Gonsalvo  
Plead his own cause in vain; that Altamira  
Untimely left you?

GONSALVO.

She's my own securely;  
Her will and mine were fitted so my nature,  
That we seem'd match'd already.

BERNARDO.

I am sorry for it.

GONSALVO.

That was not said too civilly.

BERNARDO.

Love, my Lord,  
Shou'd learn to fall behind, where Glory moves—  
I have been sounding my associates,  
And find them rightly bias'd—Can Gonsalvo  
Repay with gratitude a foe's good council,  
Or keep his secret faithfully?

GONSALVO.

GONLALVO.

Thou speak'st

Like some raw novice—one who treads barefooted,  
The paths of policy, and at each step  
Starts, lest the thorns shou'd pierce him. Hadst  
thou known

Gonsalvo rightly---Thou hadst spar'd all preface,  
Nor said this grace to mischief.

BERNARDO.

Anon, in private,

Expect to hear what well deserves attention :  
Mean while be pleas'd to meet the Lords this way,  
Who seem advancing towards us.

GONSALVO.

Love ! forgive me,

If, with thy softer claims, Gonsalvo dares  
Mix, and associate these prophaner cares ;  
Perpetual tenderness might fancy tire,  
Dull the gay god, and all unwing desire ;  
But busier intervals revive delight,  
Bend his bow strong, and point his arrows right.

(*Exeunt.*)

*End of the SECOND ACT.*

## A C T III.

S C E N E, *The Garden.*BELLARIO and ALTAMIRA, *meeting.*

ALTAMIRA.

ALONE, my Lord? I left my sister here,  
And come to tell you news.

BELLARIO.

I've heard it all.

They, but this moment left me to my thoughts;  
My mind was strangely shaken, and requir'd  
The aid of pensive solitude.

ALTAMIRA.

I press

Unwarily on your retirement——(*going*)

BELLARIO.

No, Altamira, your presence ever  
Gave delight to your Bellario's heart;  
Your image makes up all that's pleasing there.

ALTAMIRA.

---

# ALTAMIRA.

---

## A C T I.

### SCENE I. *A Garden.*

BELFORT, *alone.*

BELFORT.

**T**HE spring returns, and nature smiles around me !  
The feather'd choir revive the lonely groves !  
Soft dews awake the vegetable world !  
Yet winter, seen abroad no more, reigns here,  
Cold at my heart, in all the ice of sorrow :  
Oh, Altamira ! daughter of my soul !  
Thou sweet resemblance of thy mother's virtues !  
Thou, in whom perfect beauty was the least,  
In a long list of wonders ! why, Oh why  
Have I for ever lost thee ?

VOL. II.

B

*Exit*

*Enter* EUGENIO.

Eugenio comes——

Alas! I had forgot my friend's appointment——  
The sliding hours come on, like death, unmark'd,  
And tread upon the heel of expectation.  
—O, ever welcome, thou sincerest friend!  
Thou honest, happy man, and yet---a great one!

EUGENIO.

Bologna's walls, seen hence, my Lord, too nigh,  
Forbid my cares to sleep:---yet shaded thus,  
In your cool groves, I hop'd a short retreat;  
But Belfort sighs, and all are mourners' here!  
When will your mighty heart resume its strength,  
And beat once more for glory? yet how long  
Shall sad Bologna pine? while thus, unseen,  
In woods and groves, her brave preserver breathes  
Unactive wishes, and is deaf to fame!

BELFORT.

Perish the love of fame!--'tis love of vanity.

EUGENIO.

But, my good Lord, this unexpected change  
Alarms the world! All honest men repine,  
To see the noble Belfort thus forsake  
A court of his creating!  
Shall he lie lost in solitude and ease,  
While our good Duke, by treachery surpriz'd,  
Is haughty Milan's captive, hopeless held,  
And war, in bloody strides, stalks o'er his country?

BELFORT.



## BELFORT.

Eugenio, thou mistak'st me---I have try'd  
 The toy, call'd Greatness---yes, with shame I own it---  
 Have grasp'd the bursting bubble!---What has it  
 gain'd me?

Talk not of what I was---what am I now?  
 Where are the fruits of praise?---my private woe,  
 Feels not my public glory: I had a wife,  
 In whom the noble, and the tender strove,  
 Which best cou'd brighten excellence---I lov'd her  
 With an unwearied growth of faithful passion,  
 'Till my glad heart was fill'd to a degree,  
 That left even heaven unwish'd for---therefore  
 heaven

Untimely took her from me---unprepar'd  
 I lost her, and in life's full bloom she died!  
 Is this a world to be ambitious in?  
 Hold we such solid blessings by a tenure,  
 Thus poorly frail, and shall we toil for shadows?  
 Dying, she left two daughters---one of whom,  
 My Altamira! in her mother's absence,  
 Seem'd still her mother!---as departed sunshine,  
 Gleam'd back from the pale moon, lends form  
 to midnight,  
 Which else were utter darkness.

## EUGENIO.

Touch no more  
 That sadly-sounding string---tho' Altamira  
 Untimely died, your Lucidora lives;

4 A L T A M I R A.

Lives heiress to Bologna's dukedom! wife  
To brave Bellario! whom already fame  
Reports a conqueror in that army's front,  
Which led by him, scarce feels the want of Belfort.

BELFORT.

There starts another sorrow---who but I,  
Wretch that I am! gave this curst war a cause!  
Had not my Lucidora been refus'd  
To that fierce heir of Milan, proud Gonfhalvo,  
Still had Bologna felt the joys of peace;  
Still at her head, beheld the imprison'd Duke,  
Nor bled for wretched Belfort.

EUGENIO.

Who but the Duke  
Enforc'd that choice? who join'd Bellario's hand  
With happy Lucidora's?---When 'twas known  
That Milan's heir address'd her, our Duke then  
Fear'd, left the hatred of that hostile house,  
Might taint, so join'd, the loyalty of Belfort.

BELFORT.

Away, he cou'd not stoop to such a fear,  
Nor wrong his soldier's honesty.

EUGENIO.

Yes, Belfort,  
I can disperse your doubts, by proof, too strong  
To be disputed.

BELFORT.

BELFORT.

Proof!

EUGENIO.

Full proof,

BELFORT.

That's strange!

EUGENIO.

But that Gonsalvo's disappointment form'd  
A warmer motive, than desire to grace  
The house of Belfort, why was Lucidora,  
Your youngest daughter chosen? Altamira,  
First born, and fam'd for charms, had forc'd  
distinction,  
Nor been by chance neglected: know yet more—  
Bellario lov'd her, and was lov'd again,  
With youth's excess of passion!---'twas your absence,  
Busied in war, kept this a secret from you.

BELFORT.

How came Eugenio trusted with this secret?

EUGENIO.

Our good Duke,  
(When late by Milan's pass I gain'd admission)  
Unveil'd this mystery to me---adding further,  
That obstinately fix'd, Bellario swore,  
He never wou'd consent to be another's,  
Since all his honest heart was Altamira's.  
By this repeated disobedience urg'd,

6      A L T A M I R A.

His sov'reign father resolutely swore  
To disinherit e'en belov'd Bellario,  
Unless to save the state from threaten'd danger,  
He cross'd Gonsalvo's choice in Lucidora!

BELFORT.

'Twas cruel, and 'twas fatal.

EUGENIO.

No---blind Belfort---

Had Altamira liv'd, whose death you mourn,  
Think what a fate had then involv'd Bologna!  
An heirless state! your own great work unravell'd,  
And all those honours that adorn your blood,  
Lost, and o'erwhelm'd, in brave Bellario's ruin!

BELFORT.

May I be wretched as that fate had made me,  
But this new light, in which thou set'st to view  
My Altamira's death, sheds comfort on me,  
Which nature, faith, and counsel fail'd to give.

EUGENIO.

Greatly inspir'd, and conscious what became  
The blood of ancient Romans, Altamira,  
Nobly devoted to the public peace,  
For no known purpose, took that fatal journey,  
In which she perish'd.---O, for ever curs'd  
Be Po's impetuous flood!---Yet e'er she parted  
She left a letter for Bellario's hand,  
Who to the Duke disclos'd it.---" I go (said she)  
" Shut from the world, to pass my future days  
" In sighs and tears within a sacred cell,

" To

\* To deprecate your woes, and save my country :  
 " There will I offer up unceasing prayers,  
 " That heav'n may double on Bellario's head,  
 " The blessings I foregoe to make him happy."  
 — This----'tis the Duke's command, you now  
 shou'd know,  
 That, since the death you mourn, was thus decreed,  
 For kind and gracious ends, to heaven's high will  
 You may submit your own, and still be Belfort.

BELFORT.

And did she for such generous purpose,  
 meditate  
 Her everlasting absence ? Did she for this  
 Forake the world in the full pride of beauty ?  
 Resign her love, her peace, and her ambition,  
 And die, to serve her country and her lover ?

EUGENIO.

'Twas all as I have told you.

BELFORT.

Poor Altamira !

EUGENIO.

Say, brave and godlike.

BELFORT.

Meant you this tale for comfort ?  
 Oh ! where was then the power that wakes to guard  
 The generous and the lovely ? was it just,

8            A L T A M I R A .

That virtue, thus adorably sublime !  
Virtue ! that might have liv'd to light the world !  
Shou'd perish thus ?

EUGENIO.

My Lord, my Lord,  
Enough has nature triumph'd over glory—  
Enough has been to grief—enough to love  
Indulg'd ;—'tis time the father shou'd give way,  
And leave the man asserted.

*Enter LUCIDORA, with a letter.*

LUCIDORA.

Now, my lov'd father,  
If e'er your Lucidora's happiness  
Can give suspension to your rigid sorrow—  
Now, now vouchsafe a joy ! when gracious heav'n  
Brings back Bellario conqueror !

BELFORT.

Is that letter  
A voucher of your transport ?

LUCIDORA.

'Tis my Bellario's !  
Let his own hand assert the glorious triumph !

BELFORT.

Read it, Eugenio.

EUGENIO



EUGENIO. [*reads.*]

*I hope this letter will not reach you sooner than he who sends it; for having in my way, received the Duke's wish'd blessing, and agreed on measures for his freedom, in exchange against Gonsalvo, whom I had the good fortune to take prisoner, and have left in treaty for that purpose: I am hastening to acquaint my Lucidora and her father, what further undeserved success, it has pleased heaven to give the arms of their*

BELLARIO.

Modest and great!  
Thus Belfort conquer'd---and thus us'd to speak  
Of his own conquest.

LUCIDORA.

See, my Lord Eugenio,  
If all this happy flow of fortune's favour  
Can force one single smile, to break those clouds  
Of everlasting woe, which hide my father.

BELFORT.

Had Altamira liv'd to take her share,  
This had been perfect joy---nay, weep not child---  
Tho' nature bids me feel thy sister's loss,  
I thankfully confess thou still art mine.

LUCIDORA.

LUCIDORA.

Do not I feel, like you, my sister's loss?  
 Oh, she was all that beauty could adorn!  
 Unbounded virtue crown, and sweetness charm  
 with!

Yet, from the dead, whence none return to cheer  
 The fruitless mourner! 'tis in vain to call her:  
 Let her not be forgotten---yet remember'd  
 With humble resignation---My Bellario,  
 Bologna's princely heir! is Belfort's son!  
 To mitigate the loss of this lov'd daughter!

EUGENIO.

Hark! by that sound, like horses hasty feet,  
 Perhaps he's come already.

LUCIDORA.

'Tis he!--'tis my Bellario!

[*Exit hastily.*]

EUGENIO.

Part of my purpose, this young hero's fortune  
 Has render'd needless. Bentivoglio's fear  
 Of Milan's growing greatness, made war doubtful  
 In any hand but your's:---Bellario's conduct  
 Having dispell'd that dread, I shall hereafter,  
 Less warmly press you to forsake the shade  
 Your sorrow loves to sigh in.

BELFORT.

I knew the youth—  
 With long and frequent note have search'd his  
 soul—

Have

Have founded all his virtues—all his weakness—  
 And found him form'd for glory! Else, my friend,  
 Believe not that my woes had been indulg'd  
 In an untimely sadness—To myself,  
 Tho' lost and careless—did the public safety  
 Call for my sword, no private will were left me;  
 A good man's griefs and joys are all his country's!

*Enter* BELLARIO.

BELLARIO.

Bless'd be the hand of heav'n, my honour'd  
 Lord,  
 That I bring victory to cheer these shades,  
 Made mournful by your sorrows!

BELFORT. (*embracing him.*)

Welcome, brave youth!  
 Be this bright dawn of your illustrious greatness  
 Prophetic of the future!

EUGENIO.

May Bologna,  
 Long ages hence, when most she means to praise,  
 And bless her happiest rulers, say, their lives  
 Were lasting, and were glorious, like Bellario's!

BELLARIO.

Thanks, my good Lord Eugenio!—Praise,  
 when given  
 By the praise-worthy, carries weight that justifies  
 The pleasure it brings with it.—

It

It has pleas'd fortune, that proud Milan's arms,  
 Too weak for her presumption, fail'd her hopes;  
 Bologna's better cause, supported bravely,  
 By soldiers, whom *you* taught to die or conquer,

(to Belfort.)

In one blest'd day secur'd their country's freedom,  
 And gave this war an end.—Gonsalvo taken,  
 Already offers the good Duke's release,  
 In ransom for his liberty; with terms  
 Of due and wish'd attonement, for the wrongs  
 His rage has done Bologna.

BELFORT,

Scarce has your modesty allow'd your tongue  
 To claim your victory—report came faster,  
 And said all this before—but we must hear  
 Fuller description of Bellario's conduct,  
 Which reach'd these early wonders.

BELLARIO.

Fortune smil'd,  
 And, as I've told you, Milan lost the day.  
 There follow'd something, which, indeed, deserves  
 To be more largely dwelt on.—In their flight,  
 The scatter'd squadrons reach'd Cremona's  
 walls:

The gates were shut against us; but at midnight,  
 By storm we enter'd.—I blush to own the licence,  
 With which my soldiers, favour'd by the darkness,  
 Disgrac'd their fame for discipline. Day broke,  
 And as I trod the streets that stream'd with blood,

To

To gather the loose plunderers into order,  
A flaming convent shock'd my pitying eye !  
One frighted virgin, rushing from the fire,  
Shrieking and struggling from a soldier's grasp,  
Flew to my knees for succour---Perhaps 'twill  
move you

To hear that she was present, and beheld  
The fate of Altamira——

BELFORT.

Of Altamira !

Oh, bring me to her---blessings on the chance !  
If she was touch'd for Altamira's death,  
I will so tenderly reward her for it,  
That she shall bless captivity

BELLARIO.

Her charms might claim a nobler fortune.

[Exit.

EUGENIO.

Now will his grief, that slept in sense of triumph,  
Wake with redoubled force, and bear down all.

*Enter ALTAMIRA, in a veil, led in between  
BELLARIO and LUCIDORA.*

BELLARIO.

Receive, illustrious Belfort, in this maid,  
Stranger, and unexpected, tho' she comes,  
The fairest fruits of my first victory.

LUCIDORA.



LUCIDORA.

Prepare to hear her speak of wond'rous things!  
Things that will touch you nearly!

BELFORT.

Be it so——

Speak but of Altamira, tho' thou tell'st  
The tragedy of death---her name shall charm,  
And I will listen on, 'till life has left me.

ALTAMIRA.

O, had a thousand Altamira's died,  
Not all their deaths had merited this grief,  
From such a father as the godlike Belfort!

BELFORT. *(astonished)*

Hark! ye sweet faints of heav'n! what am I?  
where?

Bellario! Lucidora! Oh! Eugenio!  
O say, my friends! what heav'nly sounds are these?  
Speak, speak again, thou more than mortal charmer!  
Again that angel voice! nor break my heart  
With hopes, and fears, and joys, too strong for  
nature!

ALTAMIRA.

*(throwing off her veil, and kneeling.)*

All undeserving, at your feet, behold  
A daughter blushing to be mourn'd thus tenderly,  
Yet plant affliction in a father's heart.

BELFORT.



BELFORT.

'Tis she ! by every angel she resembles,  
'Tis Altamira's self ! O, my lost child !

EUGENIO.

How has kind heav'n deceiv'd a good man's  
forrow !  
And, by affliction, blest'd him !

BELLARIO.

In this, my sword  
Must own the smile of fortune ; such a gift  
To bring to Belfort, over pays a war.

LUCIDORA.

'Tis my Bellario's fate to bless mankind !

BELFORT.

To bless indeed ! The great discovery  
Of unknown land, where the keen plough turns up  
Rich ore in every furrow, is to this  
A poor success ! — Merciful heaven !  
How have I merited to be thus blest'd !  
O, my Bellario ! my Eugenio ! all ! —  
Behold me, but with pity — nor despise  
An old man's weakness ; I shall now no more  
Lie lost in misery --- my Altamira  
Return'd from death, makes life delightful to me !  
Let us indulge in transport ! Enter with me,  
This once more happy mansion ! Altamira

Shall

Shall charm you with a thousand wond'rous stories;  
How she was lost---how found---where this long  
darkness

Has hid her from my sight!—come, listen to her—  
And she shall teach you never to despair,  
Since virtue, weak as mine, deserves heav'n's care!

[*Exeunt.*]

*End of the FIRST ACT.*

## ALTAMIRA.

You know I must no longer hear you speak  
On this too tender theme.—The time has been,  
When 'twas no crime to listen to your love;  
But, now, 'tis past----and you have pledg'd your  
honour,  
No more to wound me with your plaintive passion.

## BELLARIO.

I cou'd myself have wasted life in silence,  
Had Altamira not been doom'd to hear  
Another's happier passion!—What is Gonsalvo,  
That all must aid his hopes? can Gonsalvo  
Watch your young smiles, live for your commands,  
And die for your compassion?----With that pure fire,  
Which my corrected heart was taught to know  
From your exalted goodness! What can he more  
Than his less happy conqueror? That Belfort,  
The enlightener of my mind! my virtue's founder!  
My glory's fountain! and my charmer's father!  
Shou'd give him licence to be bless'd divinely,  
While I am doom'd to everlasting woe!

## ALTAMIRA.

It grieves me, that the weakness of my heart,  
Forbids me to reproach you:---why have you  
wrong'd me?  
I hop'd I had been less a stranger to you:  
—I should have been Bellario's—but Bellario

Had then himself been lost, and my lov'd country  
 In tears beheld me happy! Let the woes,  
 The willing woes, I suffer'd to prevent it,  
 Atone refusal of the light Gonsalvo!  
 Refusal of a choice unworthy virtue:  
 Tho' the due scorn with which I treat his hopes  
 Shou'd cross Bologna's peace—Bellario's sword  
 Forbids his country's fears—and this new sacrifice,  
 Thank heaven, is needless to me

BELLARIO.

And will you not,  
 Will you not listen to the sounds of greatness?  
 Will you not then be Milan's honour'd heirs?  
 Oh! blessings on your pity! for your love  
 You will not let me call it: from what a height  
 Of happiness I fell! and what a strength  
 Of seeming certainties conspire to curse me!  
 Cou'd I have known my Altamira liv'd,  
 What threaten'd danger—or what power on earth,  
 Cou'd force me to betray my doting heart,  
 And madly, vainly, swear to be anothers!  
 —And yet—amidst this agony of passion—  
 I must be just to Lucidora's worth—  
 She is—and she deserves to be—your sister!  
 An angel sent from heav'n to sound her excellence,  
 Cou'd say no more to praise her! Had *you* not been,  
*She* had been loveliest—and my heart had swell'd  
 With sense of every charm!—pardon me, heaven!  
 That 'tis not in my power to make my love,

As

As grateful as my justice—Were I my own,  
 I must—I should be her's—but as I am,  
 I can be wretched for her—not blest'd with her.

## ALTAMIRA.

See, now, Bellario—my prophetic fears,  
 Too sadly verified—Why did you force  
 My boding heart to quit that dream of death  
 In which despair lay slumbring? Why distract me  
 With that sad picture of my father's grief?  
 Far happier had you been, to have clos'd your breast  
 Against all memory, that there liv'd a wretch,  
 So lost as Altamira! You had been blest'd—  
 And I, tho' left to weep away my life,  
 Cou'd but have been a little more unhappy;  
 Never to see you more, had been but shunning  
 To see you thus afflicted.

## BELLARIO.

Had this been common wretchedness  
 I cou'd have borne it better!—Other's pains  
 Hope mitigation, and in time have ease:  
 Mine, like the shirt of Hercules, cling closer,  
 Domestic and incurable!—You! only you,  
 Inflexible in willing woe, might save me!  
 Yes, you might soften this mistaken rigour,  
 This cold severity of stubborn virtue!  
 —You frown—and I look down on my own baseness—  
 What have I said? what have I wish'd? O shun me!  
 I shall forget my vow!—I cannot bear it!  
 The glowing torment is too strong for nature!



And I shall gaze upon thy charms so long,  
'Till I shall hate thy virtues !

ALTAMIRA.

From this moment

Be it our fix'd resolve to meet no more :  
The innocence of angels was deceiv'd  
When they defied temptation---never more—  
By all my hopes of everlasting peace,  
In a less wretched world, will I——

BELLARIO.

Hold——hold——

E'er you go on to swear that dreadful oath,  
Which, tho' it wounds beyond a thousand deaths,  
I must approve, unwillingly---grant one exception—  
One mournful blessing---Oh Altamira !  
Th' approaching conference this important night,  
Determines both our fates ! When that is ended,  
Give me one private, solemn, parting hour,  
To hear the joint result of our debate  
On Milan's hated offers !---Fear me not——  
Your virtues are triumphant ! My corrected  
Heart adores your power !---You must indulge  
A last dear sigh, at this sad sacrifice  
Of hope, and joy, and love, and peace, to honour !

ALTAMIRA.

Oh do not wrong my honest, artless truth—  
For my affections are as bright, as pure,  
As those chaste flames that burn before the shrine  
Of great Diana !

BELLARIO.



BELLARIO.

Hear my vow, chaste goddess!

We are thy votaries now!

ALTAMIRA.

Then 'tis granted; but that last sad parting over—  
 So bless, or curse me heaven! We never more  
 Will meet, unjoin'd with mix'd society,  
 Or meeting thus by chance, will fly each other.

*(Exit.*

BELLARIO.

Oh, guardian virtue! what a sovereign safety  
 Thou shed'st upon the soul! Desire itself,  
 Tho' murder'd by thee, yet adores thy cruelty;  
 When I look up to Altamira's greatness,  
 My distance shames my nature!----yet when she's  
     present,  
 Her beauty charms me to such sweet excess,  
 That my blood rages with resistless love!  
 That tempest in the soul, that raises up  
 The billows of destructive passions,  
 To shipwreck reason!

*Enter GONSALVO and BERNARDO.*

GONSALVO.

What!---sad, Bellario?

The conqueror fighting and the vanquish'd gay,  
 Puts a faint gloss upon the robe of victory:  
 Thus 'tis when young men are too early wise,  
 Beyond their age's warrant.

D 3

BELLARIO.

BELLARIO.

If 'tis your wish  
To be thought kind, you will be brief, and give me  
Your pleasure without circumstance——

GONSALVO.

Ay—let it gaul you——  
I shall take leave to rail against the conduct  
I wanted skill to equal—'Twere too civil  
To like the way that mires us—but no matter,  
Another day I may grow wise myself;  
Then you shall take revenge, and praise Gonsalvo  
'Till he grows tired to hear you.

BELLARIO.

It was so lately  
I left Gonsalvo, treating with my father,  
That I confess, to see him here so soon,  
Was strange, and unexpected.

GONSALVO.

Love ! powerful love,  
Removes all difficulties ! wou'd you give  
A treaty wings—add Altamira to it !  
And it shall fly with as secure a speed  
As those light rogues, my soldiers——

BELLARIO.

Altamira

Inspires no fugitives : She loves the brave,  
Successful or unhappy.

GONSALVO.

GONSALVO.

Does she ? thank heaven !

My title then stands fair : I dare appeal  
To you for testimony---that those villains  
Who ran me out of Milan, wanted attraction  
To draw their leader after them :--- mean while  
Be pleas'd, my Lord, to know the noble Belfort  
Approves conditions, and inclines to peace :  
Cold Altamira shuns to seal the bond  
That all our hopes depend on :---your perswasion,  
Or I grow dim too soon, has influence with her :  
I cannot doubt your will to point me right ;  
Mere gratitude requires you court her for me ;  
So shall the just Bellario, who robb'd me  
Of one sweet sister, state a fair account,  
And pay me with the other.

BELLARIO.

I must take leave

To check this freedom in its loose career ;  
You toy too freely with a lady's name,  
Who gives me no commission to dispose her :  
But that I wou'd not, in the house of Belfort,  
Too far indulge the frankness of my nature,  
I should grow warm. Gonsalvo---

GONSALVO.

Prithee do---

For 'tis thy coldness in my cause has spoil'd it.

D 4

BELLARIO.

## BELLARIO.

Nay then I stand confirm'd ; not love, but envy  
 Gave birth to your new flame for Altamira !  
 But know, gay Prince, she shall not be the tie  
 Of this insidious union ! No—tho' her father,  
 Join'd with my own, who doubly is my father,  
 The sovereign of Bellario, firm'd your claim,  
 I wou'd resist it solely ! E'er I submit  
 To ratifie that article—unask'd,  
 Unransom'd, take your freedom—be again  
 Bologna's enemy, as you are mine !  
 Gather new armies, drain the blood of Milan,  
 And try, once more, your sword against Bellario !

*Enter BELFORT and EUGENIO.*

## BELFORT.

Methinks, I heard your voice too loud, Bellario,  
 To suit this place—Gonsalvo is my guest ;  
 And you forget that Belfort has a right  
 To give protection here.

## GONSALVO.

Youth, youth, my Lord—  
 We shall grow old, and wiser : even this moment  
 I was taught something, nor had heard before,  
 That, *both your daughters bold divided claim*  
*In one Bellario !*—I--and my kind guardian,  
 Bernardo, will, with your good leave, walk on—  
 You have a tempting garden—the fresh breeze

Will

Will fan resentment cooler : At my return,  
 Shou'd we be still wasp-bitten—I shall thank  
 This angry rival for his brave dismissal ;  
 And Bentivoglio, being free already,  
 Let there be sport again ! Fortune is fickle,  
 And owes me a good turn ; for the last prank  
 I have not yet forgiven her.

[*Exeunt Gonzalvo and Bernardo.*]

BELFORT.

Was this wife ?

Was it even decent ? I o'erhear'd it all !  
 Skreen'd by the shade, in which I blush'd unseen,  
 At a Bellario, so unlike Bellario !  
 Doubly unmindful what to him was due,  
 And what to Altamira.

BELLARIO.

Sir, I know it——

For, at your entrance, every conscious drop  
 That warms th' unwary heart which has offended,  
 Rush'd to get foremost to my glowing cheek,  
 And paint repentance there.—I was too hot——  
 The artlessness of honesty betray'd me ;  
 I could not brook the rudeness of his hope ;  
 Too daring for a captive——

BELFORT.

Grant his gayety

Presum'd too frankly—was it your's, or mine,  
 To treat for Altamira ? Heedless youth

Is



Is rash on both sides ; you would eise have weigh'd  
 In reason's scale, not gallantry's, the worth  
 Of peace to warring nations : Were Gonsalvo  
 Of gent'ler manners, had he the softer passions,  
 I, and my daughter had esteem'd him more ;  
 But now we are not to consult our choice ;  
 Bologna claims her in Gonsalvo's right,  
 And I resign her to her country's wishes.

BELLARIO.

My Lord, your pardon—It wou'd ill become me  
 To interpose my will against Bologna's,  
 Or Belfort's better claim in Altamira ;  
 I shall presume no farther. [Exit Bellario.]

EUGENIO.

Is it not plain ?

He loves her still with so unquench'd a passion,  
 I tremble at the danger.

BELFORT.

I believ'd it——

I saw it but too visibly before ;  
 But it was due to prudence thus to sound him,  
 Least I had judg'd too rashly.

EUGENIO.

You do not mean  
 In truth, to force her to become Gonsalvo's ?

BELFORT.

Forbid it Nature, and forbid it Love.  
 If I mistake not, my Eugenio——

[pausing.  
I've



I've read of pure platonic intercourse.—  
If honour can do this ? if friendship is  
Like Angels, without sex—all may be well ;  
Yet will I to the utmost try the doubt ;  
Bellario shall be urg'd to the extent  
Of his unguarded nature ; I will this night,  
With seeming obstinacy of command,  
Insist, that Altamira bends her will  
To meet Gonfhalvo's love ! further to push  
This all-discovering trial, she shall believe  
That in resentment of Bellario's rashness,  
She must, to-morrow leave him, and with me  
Set out, to wait in person on the Duke,  
Resign her will to his, and wed Gonfhalvo.

EUGENIO.

This, if Bellario bears, our fears are false ;  
And neither Lucidora's peace in danger,  
Nor Altamira's honour.

BELFORT.

If on the contrary,  
At once, unguarded, he betrays surprise,  
Resentment, and impatience, 'tis confirm'd,  
He's hurried by his passions to designs,  
Which his dimm'd reason sees not, nor believes ;  
For lovers judge as ill of their own hearts,  
As if they were anothers---oft, at once  
Deceiv'd, and the deceivers:--- This shall be  
proved :

For

For he who bears one injury, invites  
 A second ! 'till wrongs do multiply,  
 And reputation bleeds !---Let us avoid  
 Gonsalvo for a moment---I would receive  
 Your further friendly counsel.

*[Exeunt Belfort and Eugenio.]*

*Re-enter GONSALVO and BERNARDO.*

GONSALVO.

Hist ! let us wait—

I must be mindful to preserve due distance,  
 Betwixt the vanquish'd, and the vanquishers.—  
 Proud, tho' they call me, I submit, thou seest,  
 To walk behind, unbidden,---So---now, go on—  
 ---You were saying---my trusty friend Bernardo,  
 That having mark'd, but now, Bellario's insult,  
 And rightly judging some revenge was due,  
 You chose this lucky moment to speak out  
 Your long conceal'd attachment : you inform me,  
 That the Canneſchians gave Bologna greatness,  
 E'er Bentivoglio was a royal name ;  
 That there still breathes an ardour to restore  
 The fame of this crush'd family ; that now  
 Conspiracy grown ripe, invites my tasting ;  
 And that the wrongs your merit has sustain'd,  
 Have plac'd you at the head of this new faction !

BERNARDO.

You have conceiv'd it fully---all but this---

The

The friends of liberty deserve a name,  
More lov'd than that of faction.

GONSALVO,

Do they not?

Did I say faction?---I meant patriotism!  
What tho' the duke, who holds the rank thou  
merits,  
Has trusted thee to head blind myrmidons,  
Brave blunderers! who support a power they love  
not,  
Is that a reason thou shou'd'st serve him faithfully?  
Never pretend it---honesty supposes  
A counter-tally---honesty to honesty,  
Each fitting into other---ask the priests,  
They'll tell thee to a man, that Truth is Knavery  
When told for the wrong cause---while he, who sins  
On the right side, is sanctified.

BERNARDO.

This night,

The Duke, releas'd by your command, expects  
To reach Bologna: not a soldier waits him,  
But with implicit blindness, executes  
What I direct, all, long dependant on me,  
And taught to hope, or fear, but from my fortune.  
---Near as he is---'twill be Gonsalvo's fault  
If Bentivoglio sees Bologna more!  
Bellario's daring arm, and Belfort's eye,

Both

Both absent from the city, make all easy :  
 Your *friendship*, Sir, your promise of protection,  
 Secures us your's ! We, then, are Milan's friends !

GONSALVO.

*Friendship*, Bernardo, is a smiling harlot,  
 That when she kisses, kills ! so says the world--

BERNARDO.

*Hypocrisy*, my lord, high fed with promises,  
 Court promises ! can but to *hatred* turn.

GONSALVO.

And *hatred* hatch'd at home, like a tame tyger,  
 May fawn, and sport, but never leaves his nature !  
 Now he is rous'd to mischief ! to rebellion !  
 Be it so---'tis well--we will enjoy it.

BERNARDO.

I, but as your lieutenant, wish to hold  
 The state your arms secure ; Milan's power,  
 Encreas'd by this accession, but defends  
 The servants of her greatness.

GONSALVO.

Be a duke !

Be king, Bernardo ! emperor ! every thing !  
 Titles and power, and sure support from Milan,  
 Are all at thy disposal :---but the death  
 Of the old duke---I wou'd not wish that necessary.  
 Were this young ranter, this Bellario duke,  
 There might be cause to crush the serpent's head

Left

Lest he should turn and bite us ! Bentivoglio  
Is a safe, harmless snake, that bears no poison.

BERNARDO.

Leave to my choice

To act in that as safety shall require ;  
To-morrow, this proud spirit of Bellario,  
Shall, like a dewy calmness, that succeeds  
A loud, and frightful tempest, sink to silence,  
And never dare insult Gonsalvo more.

GONSALVO.

One thing there is, more wish'd than power,  
ambition,  
Revenge, or fame---'tis *pleasure* ! my Bernardo !  
The pleasure to compel reluctant love !  
Who knows where Belfort, mad at our success,  
May lock up Altamira ? these close convents  
Have a shrewd knack at keeping virtue cold,  
In spite of all love's wildfire !---while, to night,  
You, in Bologna, strike th' important moment,  
Leave me to follow you with Altamira !  
Some dozen of your whisker'd, fierce hussars,  
Left to plead for me, will persuade her coyness  
To ride as light as your old amazons,  
And visit you, e'er morning, at Bologn-;

BERNARDO.

'Tis done. I will assign to your command  
Fellows so harden'd to a life of daring,  
That they delight in blood, and feel no danger,

GONSALVO.

GONSALVO.

Chuse me a trusty, and a swift courier;  
I will write instantly: all Milan's power  
Shall march! and unsuspected, wait your call  
To justify this night!---plot, ye faint thinkers,  
Tire your weak brains, with doubts, and plans  
and arts  
To smooth your prospects, and ensure success.  
He who would wish to win at Fortune's play,  
At once should think, and act, and force his way.

[*Exeunt.*]*End of the* THIRD ACT.

ACT



A C T IV.

SCENE, *An Anti-chamber, in ALTAMIRA'S Apartment. A Table, Lights.*

ALTAMIRA, *reading.*

ALTAMIRA.

'T IS midnight---sure, unusual stillness reigns;  
Now, in this solemn, awful, silent hour,  
Let contemplation rise! and to the heart  
Of Altamira, hold reflexion's glass!  
Dar'st thou behold the dreaded image there?  
Alas! thou dar'st not :---shou'd'st thou search too  
deep,  
The dark ideas, which may start to fright thee,  
Wou'd double all the horrors of the night!  
---My sister's husband!---whither am I wandering?  
What, tho' my love is pure, as the pale beams  
That light up morning! cold as Alpine frosts,  
And chaste as unoffending infancy---

VOL. II.

E

The

The pleasure which his presence gives, alarms me!  
 And not to fly the possibility,  
 Were to invite the danger! sure Bellario  
 Forgets the interview he press'd so warmly.---

[*Looks at a watch.*]

What if he fails? oh, cheated Altamira!  
 The pain that question gives thee, proves thy  
 weakness;  
 'Tis time to be myself! to-morrow comes!  
 Rise, bright, propitious morning! hasten forward,  
 Shine on my fears! my sacred oath shall conquer!  
 And every pang that inclination feels,  
 Adds triumph to my virtue!

*Enter* LUCIDORA.

Sister!--I thought  
 That I, alone, of all this silent house  
 Was waking---Why are you so late a visitor?

LUCIDORA.

I know not from what impulse, but my heart  
 Is sad with apprehension: I am happy,  
 Yet cannot cease from sighing.---

ALTAMIRA.

This is common.

Often the spirits, swell'n by sudden joy,  
 Sink, from the strong excess, and bring on sadness:  
 ---'Twill have no consequence; nor were it impulse,  
 Shou'd it be thus indulg'd; for such forebodings  
 Make

Make distant ills, by apprehension, present;  
As men condemn'd to die, before their death,  
Lose life in expectation.

LUCIDORA.

How wise, my sister,  
How weigh'd, and how remov'd from common  
weakness,  
Are all your thoughts, and actions:---I must relate  
My hearts new anguish, for your friendly cure---  
I have observ'd, in my Bellario,  
Since his return, a dumb, and joyless gloom:  
Often he starts, as if from inward pain;  
Yet, if I tell him so, he owns it not,  
But still grows more displeas'd, the more I press  
To know his cause of sadness: then I weep  
And he looks pity---tears himself away:  
And seems not angry, but as if distress'd  
By something, which he wou'd not have me share,  
Rather, than vex'd by any grief, I give him.

ALTAMIRA.

I wish my sister had not felt this pain,  
Nor told it Altamira; where we love  
We find contagion in each others woes;  
I weep already for your kindred sorrow. [*weeping.*]

LUCIDORA.

You ever was too kind to Lucidora.  
---I will but add this melancholly circumstance,  
And move your tears no more.---At this late hour  
Bellario flies me, and amidst the garden,

E 2

Walks

Walks, lonely, under night's unfriendly dews,  
 Chusing to listen to the raven's screamings,  
 Which make night dreadful with their baneful cries,  
 Rather than hear the voice of Lucidora.

ALTAMIRA.

Women reflect not, what important cares  
 May press the thoughts of busy, active man!  
 You know the state's whole fortune now depends  
 Upon Bellario's conduct.

LUCIDORA.

He told me so—  
 And, further, that the proffer'd terms of peace  
 Required his utmost caution——Solitude,  
 He said, unfetter'd thought——and he wou'd take  
 A few lone hours from night---and smile to-morrow  
 ——What was you reading, sister?

ALTAMIRA.

'Tis the story  
 Of an unhappy maid, who lov'd too rashly,  
 Believ'd, and was undone.——

LUCIDORA.

She was too vain.

ALTAMIRA.

Why think you so?

LUCIDORA.

'Tis our own conscious sense  
 Of what the men call beauty, gives us pleasure  
 To hear that beauty prais'd; from praise grows love,  
 That

The frankness of my visit.

*(Gonsalvo muffles himself in his cloak, and enters the chamber, followed by two of the guards:---immediately is heard within, the clasp of swords---and Bellario re-enters, driving the guards before him.)*

BELLARIO.

Villains ! who are ye ? know me for Bellario !

FIRST GUARD.

My Lord Bellario !

BELLARIO.

Who set you on ? what execrable villain,  
Gave orders for this mischief ?

FIRST GUARD.

Our captain swore us  
To follow hither, and obey Gonsalvo.

*Re-enter GONSALVO from the chamber.*

BELLARIO.

Gonsalvo !

GONSALVO.

He---the same [*throwing off his cloak*]

A bold intruder !

To take advantage of two hasty lovers !---

Fie, fie---you shou'd have lock'd the chamber door ;

The Lady then, by privilege of sex,

Had



Had given my thoughts the lie—  
 She swoons within—and I had staid to help her,  
 But your quick sword recall'd me.—Tell-tale blun-  
 derers— *(The guards go off.)*

What! gone!—These rogues are cowards out of  
 season—

There was a time if they had run thus lightly,  
 It wou'd have better served me.—But to business.  
*(Draws his sword.)*

Now, what Bellario asks, 'tis mine to answer.

BELLARIO.

Hold thy rash hand, and find a better time,  
 A place more apt for murder—What thou wou'd'st  
 I know not, for my thoughts are lost in wonder;  
 But if thy baseness is not blind, as I am,  
 A lady's honour will deserve thy care;  
 Be mindful, shou'd we urge disturbance further,  
 Whose fame is blasted by us.

GONSALVO.

Be mindful, say you?

Yes, by the powers of envy, I am mindful—  
 Thy sharp, thy most luxurious appetite,  
 (Thou glutton after beauty!) has now twice  
 Checkt my imperious love with disappointment;  
 But if I not revenge it, may I fast  
 'Till age shall make forbearance a forc'd virtue,  
 And not worth heaven's acceptance—I will kill thee!  
 I will not give thee time or chance to 'scape me—  
 My fortunes are at stake! the game of death



That love breeds confidence; and faith, deceiv'd,  
Where ends it but in ruin?

ALTAMIRA.

True—but virtue  
Was given us for a guard—cannot we love  
And yet be watchful?

LUCIDORA.

It is not quite impossible—  
Yet to withstand temptation where we love,  
Is oft too hard for virtue: vice assumes  
An angel's form, and tempts by slow degrees,  
Artful, to wind itself about the heart;  
We shou'd not once admit the wily phantom;  
If it approach the hand, or court the eye,  
Who knows but it may warm the heart to wishes?  
Honour is the religion of our sex,  
And casts a chaste divinity on beauty.

ALTAMIRA.

Yet where two hearts of social worth unite,  
Even pleasure there is virtue.

LUCIDORA.

Such shou'd be marriage—  
Far other pleasures wait unlawful love.  
But I forget the hour—'tis time to rest—  
Sleep may subdue these rash, intruding cares,  
And hide me from my grief—sister, good night.

[Exit.]

ALTAMIRA:

Heaven calm your pensive breast with wish'd repose.

Oh guilt! how sharp must thy reflection be,  
When weakness, innocent as mine, thus starts,  
And feels unmeant reproaches! It delights me,  
In spite of all my friendship's tenderest folly,  
That cares have kept him absent! had he been here  
When Lucidora enter'd—what had it seem'd?  
How terrible to honour is the thought?

*Enter* BELLARIO.

Who's that! defend me heaven! he's here! why  
came you  
At this late hour?—'twas but a moment since  
My sister left me.

BELLARIO.

I watch'd her to her chamber:  
There may she sleep, unhappy Lucidora!  
Free from the cares which goad my fatal bosom!

ALTAMIRA.

What mean you?

BELLARIO.

Nothing---I cannot mean---  
For every sense, but that of woe, has left me:  
Your cruel father tells me, 'tis resolv'd,  
That hated Milan shall, e'er long, be blest'd  
With Altamira's hand!

ALTAMIRA.

A L T A M I R A.

E'er long, indeed—

'Tis doom'd to be to morrow !—Yet know this,  
 Tho' with the morning's dawn I quit for ever  
 This happy house, where first I saw Bellario,  
 No distance shall compel me to forget him !  
 No power on earth condemn me to the hope  
 Of far deceiv'd Gonsalvo.

BELLARIO.

To-morrow !

A L T A M I R A.

My father's fix'd resolve will have it so.

BELLARIO.

Never !—by all the wasted vows, my heart  
 Has mingled with the winds ! and sigh'd in vain  
 To cruel Altamira ! never—never—  
 Honour, fame, faith, allegiance, reason, first  
 Shall sink in violation ! and the blood  
 Of curs'd Gonsalvo, drown at once the name,  
 And the distresses of this wretch Bellario.—

*[going.]*

A L T A M I R A.

O stay—what madness this !—speak not so loud.  
 Is this your care of Altamira's honour ?  
 Your horrid purpose is not just, nor needful—  
 Religion yields a safe retreat to sorrow :  
 'Tis but to turn away my thoughts from you,  
 And wish my father, and my sister happy,

This

This wretched world has then no object left,  
That can recal a sigh from Altamira.

BELLARIO.

And think you I can live when you are gone,  
And bear a second time, this burning torture ?  
When I but thought you dead, hard as it was,  
Due resignation taught me to submit,  
Because complaint was warring against heaven.  
But this new voluntary death in life,  
Is past a mortals bearing !—no—may I fall  
To be the sport of infamy---If this sword,  
Which you forbid to save you from Gonsalvo,  
Shall not revenge your loss upon myself !  
And in that moment, when those matchless charms  
Are ravish'd from my eyes, dismiss my heart,  
Which has no business here, but Altamira !

ALTAMIRA.

What have you sworn ? rash man ! this horrid  
thought  
Remain'd, undreaded, to convince my soul,  
There is, on this side death, no end of sorrow !

BELLARIO.

Wou'd you not wish me dead, make life a blessing !  
Rouse your resentment, at this doom'd disposal !  
That rates your everlasting peace, at nothing !  
You have a choice ! assert it !---what ! shall mere  
forms,

Thin,

Thin, empty, outward ties of policy,  
The cobweb threads of law ! that were but meant  
To bind the frightened vulgar, make a wretch  
Of Altamira ! who has worth, and wisdom,  
To weigh against a thousand angry worlds !  
Disdain it !---call your reason to your aid---  
Reason, in such a cause, will side with passion !  
Break the detested chain ! to love and me,  
Trust every future care !---nor frown, to kill me,  
While my deyoted soul breaks through my eyes,  
To rove in raptures, o'er your lovely beauties---

## ALTAMIRA.

If there's a power that loves exalted virtue,  
He will protect it ! and on false Bellario,  
Revenge this insult !---away---forsake me !---  
Begone for ever---thy unveil'd design  
Glares on each guilty accent ! never again  
Will I behold thy face---cruel Bellario !  
Lest I shou'd blush away my injur'd soul !  
Oh ! thou hast robb'd me of my dearest blessing,  
That soft delight, mistaken friendship gave me !

## BELLARIO.

Unkind reproacher : Is there left a way  
To shun a life of woe, but by thus daring  
To bless, and to be bless'd ? you know it--think it--  
And sure my Altamira is above  
The little arts and follies of her sex !

Their



Their tears, their tremblings, their unwill'd resist-  
ance——

And all their feeble falsehoods.

ALTAMIRA.

Scarce does my soul  
Disdain Bellario's guilty passion more,  
Than such detested artifice in woman;  
Her practis'd coyness, her dissembled rage,  
At the soft name of love; while at her heart,  
Close in her inmost thoughts she hugs the traitor,  
And feels his fiercest fires!--I own his power——  
And bow, obedient, to the tyrant God!——  
Yet let not this confession wrong my heart;  
Wou'd you deserve my passion, cherish not  
A wish, but may be join'd with nicest honour:  
Give me your love, a pure, and lambent flame,  
Light, without heat, chaste as the vestal fires.

BELLARIO.

Leave to the frosty stoicks that idea,  
That wild, platonic ghost, of dead desire!  
My unattending soul can now learn nothing,  
But the soft lessons of those speaking eyes,  
Which sparkle back my fire, and shine with love!

ALTAMIRA.

Leave me, perfidious tempter! traitor! leave me,  
Or, dying, I shall hate thee!--hark! what noise!

*(A noise is heard without.)*

We



We are surpriz'd ! and my fair fame is blasted !

BELLARIO.

Wou'd you be safe from the officious eye  
Of some late stranger, whom mistake or accident,  
Has guided hither, hide me in your chamber——

ALTAMIRA.

Sooner shall death conceal me from myself,  
And a reproaching world——

BELLARIO.

Hark ! it comes nearer !  
This ill-tim'd niceness will destroy your fame—  
My caution wou'd preserve it !---some of the stran-  
gers

Returning from the neighbouring revels late,  
Mistake this quarter for their own apartment—  
While to your chamber we retire, conceal'd,  
They find their error, and I 'scape unseen.

ALTAMIRA.

O heaven !

BELLARIO.

Be rul'd—for honour's sake—for mine—for love  
(*Forcas ber in.*)

*Enter*

*Enter GONSALVO, BERNARDO, and  
Guards.*

BERNARDO.

This is the anti-chamber, nearest that  
In which your Altamira sleeps secure,  
Not dreaming of our neighbourhood.

GONSALVO.

Wou'd I was nearer;  
I cou'd submit to want of your good company;  
What was the noise below? I fear'd prevention.

BERNARDO.

The bunggling rogues, whom I had posted there,  
With orders to secure us from intrusion,  
Were executing that command too loudly—  
—Now, my lord,---farewel---  
I leave you to your amorous wishes---  
And hasten on before you to the city--- (*Exit.*)

GONSALVO.

Now---my brave trusty friends---for your disposal---

You two---the nearest to this chamber door,  
Entering with me, proceed as I direct;  
The rest wait here, to guard us to your party---  
---Give me my cloak---I do not love to blush---  
And might, if she shou'd know me, and reproach  
The

Is playing at Bologna, and 'tis mine  
To throw at all for Milan.

BELLARIO.

As thou'rt a foldier,  
Make truce with rashness, and depart this place  
For Altamira's sake.

GONSALVO.

For her sake? Yes,  
Just such a chaste delay she merits from me,  
As for my sake she taught desire to suffer,  
Who supping here to-night with you, fear'd not  
To come with a new appetite to-morrow,  
When 'twas my turn to give the feast of love!

BELLARIO.

Brutal reproacher! love disdains thy mention---  
Since thou wilt cover her with shame---Die first  
A victim to her blushes.

*(They fight, Bellario is wounded.)*

See---thou hast wounded me---be yet advis'd---  
Which ever is decreed---my death, or thine,  
I wou'd not wish it here.

GONSALVO.

Here!---here!---by heaven!  
Living, or dead, I will disclose thy baseness,  
And pay, with shame, my wrongs from Altamira!  
*(Fight again, Gonsalvo is wounded and disarm'd.)*

BELLARIO.

The rage of thy resentment has deceiv'd thee.

I have

I have return'd my wound---thou bleed'st as I do;  
 But leave me to my fate---go---be sorry---  
 Live to repent, and be a wretch as I am.

GONSALVO.

I will be sorry for my luckless fate.  
 'Sdeath! jilted every way!---Why thou wert born  
 To rival me in glory and in love.  
 In love to rob me basely!---but revenge  
 Has yet one way---I will proclaim it loudly. [*Exit.*]

BELLARIO.

The rais'd house  
 Already takes the alarm; from room to room,  
 Cross the dim windows of the court, I see  
 The shooting lights move fast; and, from below,  
 The noise of gathering numbers kill my hopes!  
 Oh, Altamira! what were all these fears  
 Did they not join thee with me? Now, too late,  
 Love flatters not the heart, but owns his weakness,  
 And gives due place to reason. I will go in,  
 And since 'tis vain to offer comfort to her,  
 Divide her shame---Protect her in disgrace,  
 And catch the blushes from her lovely face. [*Exit.*]

*End of the* FOURTH ACT.

A C T V.

SCENE *continues.*

BELFORT, *alone.*

BELFORT.

WHY are we fathers, Heaven! daughter and  
son  
Are dear deceiving names! whose powerful sound  
Dilates the tender heart, but to improve  
The parent's large capacity for pain.

LUCIDORA *enters from the Bedchamber;  
weeping.*

Oh, Lucidora!—now my only child!  
Why are we thus?—but thou art dumb with grief;  
—Would I had not been Belfort! infamy  
Flies over, and disdains the humble cottage.  
Th' exempted vulgar lie too low for shame!

VOL. II.

F

Proud

Proud honour tempests up the elated mind,  
Awakens anguish—and denies to nature  
Forgetfulness of sorrow.

LUCIDORA.

Oh my father! would I cou'd give you comfort!

BELFORT.

Had I been born, to 'scape reflections sting,  
Some blest, unfeeling hind—I had not fought  
For torturing reasons, why the daughter's shame  
Demands the father's vengeance! had not thus  
Grown mad—confounded, in this maze of ruin!  
Oh, Altamira! what a fall was thine!  
Dying Gonsalvo, wanton then, no more,  
Felt like a father—and was half ashamed  
To tell thy ruin—Foe as he was——  
He pitied the new wretchedness he gave me;  
As if he wou'd have said—see, weak old man,  
The fruits of thy past sorrow! how didst thou  
mourn

Her fancied death! unknowing all that while,  
The death so mourn'd, had screen'd her in the grave  
And sav'd thee from the shame she brings thee now

LUCIDORA.

Will you not see my sister?

BELFORT.

I will! I must!

LUCIDORA.



LUCIDORA.

Alas! your voice and look are charg'd with  
terror!

I tremble to behold you. In your eye  
I read some dreadful meaning!—on my knees  
I beg you, by the dear remember'd sweetness  
Of my dead mother's love—pity my sister—  
Till now, she dwelt at your fond heart—your  
charmer—

The living likeness of my buried mother,  
Who left her to your love.—O, she is innocent!  
Pure and unsullied as the mountain snow:  
Gonsalvo was our enemy confess'd—  
Rejected---revengeful---prone to slander—  
Believe him not, Sir,---let your resentment cool---

BELFORT.

Rise, Lucidora—

LUCIDORA.

Not till your pity

*(Belfort raises her)*

Prevails against your anger---Had you seen her  
But now, as I did---prostrate, and abandon'd  
To every wild distress---you wou'd---you must  
Have wept her strange, unhappy, cruel fortunes.

BELFORT.

Where is Bellario? I want revenge:  
For tears are vain, and I can weep no more—

The thoughts of vengeance has already dried  
My show'ry eyes, as the soft dropping clouds  
Are driven off by storms :---where is Bellario?

LUCIDORA.

I found him with her——

And when our eyes at entrance met each other,  
Both dumb, beneath the double woe, we stood,  
As each had will to speak, but found no power---  
At last, Bellario sigh'd, and turning, cry'd--  
“ Pity your injur'd sister---for she is innocent---  
“ Th' intended guilt was mine.”---and then retir'd.  
---O, my father ! bring not more misery on me---  
Comfort my poor departing, injur'd sister---  
Or I, unguilty, shall be punish'd most.

BELFORT.

Thy goodness fills me with a lively sense  
Of shame, for over-rating Altamira,  
And in the partial blindness of my age,  
Neglecting worth like thine ! 'till now, I knew not  
This sovereign greatness of thy moving virtue :  
But cease to press me in thy sister's cause ;  
I am not yet enough my self to see her :  
I must retire—and, if I can, resume  
My soul.—I shall have need of all my strength,  
To act like Belfort, yet not loose the father.

(*Exeunt severally.*)

SCENE

SCENE *discovers another Chamber.*

ALTAMIRA.

O, hated light ! O wretched Altamira !  
 ---Gonfalvo dead ; and my Bellario dying !  
 And do I live that am the fatal cause ?  
 Even conscious virtue can't support me now :  
*(pulling out a dagger.*  
 This is my only refuge ! friendly death,  
 Opens his hospitable arms for all.

*Enter* LUCIDORA.

LUCIDORA.

Thou instance of affliction's utmost power !  
 When will thy frightened soul recover rest ?  
 Can reason offer nothing to thy aid ?

ALTAMIRA. *[rising.*

'Tis lost ! that glorious light is quench'd for ever !  
 Why weep you thus ? why look you kindly at me ?  
 Are you not woman ? not an injur'd wife ?  
 And are you still a sister, and a friend ?  
 What though I never wrong'd you even in thought,  
 Can that secure me from the babbling world ?  
 Whose rigid, yet, unerring laws, demand  
 A conduct unsuspected !---reputation clear---  
 For to despise, is to deserve reproach !  
 Oh ! who can live the slander of each sex ?

F 3

E'en

E'en I am fallen to own my sister's pity  
A blessing I deserve not!

LUCIDORA.

Think not so meanly of me---We cannot judge  
Temptation's force---'till we have try'd our hearts  
And triumph'd o'er its danger;---yet vain woman  
Accuses woman loudest---bitter, insulting,  
Reproachful, and implacable---nor fears,  
Nor questions for her self---anon, she falls,  
Unpitied in her turn; and then, too late,  
Remembers, that compassion is a virtue.

ALTAMIRA.

Oh! thou art all that can make goodness charm,  
And infamy detestable! if yet, [ing,  
If after all my sorrows---all my shame,  
Death cou'd deserve a pang---'twould be to lose  
The blessing of thy converse! no more to hear thee,  
No more to thank thee---for the grave is dark  
As my sad prospect---and will leave me nothing,  
Not even my grateful sense of what I owe thee.

LUCIDORA.

Turn thy afflicted thoughts to some new subject;  
I know not how to chuse, yet wish a theme  
Less suited to your sadness.

ALTAMIRA.

Do not forget---  
When I, perhaps, shall see his face no more,

To

To breathe thy comforts on my father's sorrow.  
 Tell him, whatever punishment my fault  
 May merit from his anger, the severest,  
 The hardest agony I had to bear,  
 Was, that I brought him shame, and made him  
 wretched.

LUCIDORA.

Defend us, gracious heaven! See where he comes!

*Enter* BELFORT.

ALTAMIRA.

Open, kind earth, and save me from his eye!

*(Sinking to the ground.*

BELFORT.

*(After looking some time at her.*

Art thou my child? art thou my Altamira?

ALTAMIRA.

I am that lost—that once-lov'd Altamira,  
 Who, for her country's peace, resign'd the world!  
 Resign'd my love! and even you my father!

*(Lucidora raises her.*

From that assylum wherefore was I torn,  
 To be again the daughter of misfortune?  
 For now no name is left me—Kneeling, behold  
 Your first-born child—with fondness rear'd,  
 And daily fed upon your virtuous precepts—  
 Pardon my first offence—my fatal error!  
*That midnight assignation!*—yet hear me,

F 4

While



While I to heaven appeal for justice!  
 By all the souls that have for chastity  
 Been register'd, I am as free from guilt  
 As those bright saints!---Forgive, forgive me, Sir.

BELFORT. (*Raising her.*

Let me endear thee once more to my bosom---  
 Here press thee close, close to my sad heart;  
 Before we take a long eternal leave,  
 Let me indulge the old, fond, doating father---  
 O let me wander back to happier days,  
 To see thy mother's early fondness for thee,  
 To hear the vain profusion of her hopes  
 Pour'd out in praise, and tender prophecies  
 Of what thy future fame---and what thy virtues!---  
 Is it all come to this?---'tis well she's gone---  
 She died in peace, and was deceiv'd and happy.  
 ---I pray'd for children, and heaven gave me you:  
 I thought myself so blest'd, that all my prayers  
 Thenceforth became thanksgivings! for as you grew,  
 So grew my love, and my fond hope together,  
 And I had nothing left to wish for more:  
 ---Yet---who would be a father in my stead?

BELLARIO *is led in faint and bloody, and seated  
 in a chair, the servants retire.*

Cruel, base Bellario!

BELLARIO.



BELLARIO.

Unhappy Belfort.

ALTAMIRA.

Break, break, detested heart! thou can'st not bear  
This complicated scene of shame and misery!

*(Falls into a chair weeping.)*

LUCIDORA.

Unkind Bellario,

Why have you shunn'd me? why have you bled so  
long,

Unaided by my care? how pale you look?

You might have seen your faithful Lucidora——  
She would not have reproach'd you.

BELLARIO.

Thou great example

Of what should charm in woman! O Lucidora!

'Till time shall be no more, thy injur'd sex

Will cite thy name to vindicate their glory!

It grieves me that my life is on the wing,

And cannot stay to thank thy wond'rous goodness.

——Belfort! I would not die beneath thy curse:

All that a crime, like mine, can urge with hope

To a wrong'd father's heart, is this——confess

The hand of fate thro' all our deep distress,

And date it from my father's *rash resolve*!

Love is a sacred tie, and will not be

Dissolv'd, to serve the ends of mean ambition!

But

But in this wretchedness, which his command  
Has forced upon Bellario—be it my joy,  
That the son suffers to atone the father.

BELFORT.

I feel, like you, the hand of heaven upon us,  
And moderate my anger: but my sorrow  
Finds no relief! I am the mark of misery!  
Small comfort whence the cruel thunder came,  
Since every bolt has reach'd me.

BELLARIO.

When I am dead, do not mistake the pity  
Of Altamira, and miscall it guilt:  
While my fast ebbing blood can give me life,  
It cannot be employ'd to nobler purpose,  
Than to absolve her innocence.—I do confess  
(Hurried by frenzy and despair) my vow  
Of honour and fidelity was chang'd  
To purpos'd guilt—but gracious heaven  
Preserv'd me from the crime! and transform'd  
Th' intended, worthless, base, destroyer,  
To be the blest preserver of her honour!  
Gonsalvo's guards, secur'd, must tell the rest;  
For I, grown faint, can add no more—chilling death  
Creeps over me—and pain—at every pang  
Shakes life's dim flame—that quivers on the point,  
And longs to leap away.—O Belfort!—Lucidora!  
Altamira!—All—can you forgive me?

*Enter*

*Enter* EUGENIO.

EUGENIO.

Well it becomes the fate of lost Bellario,  
To doubt forgiveness here—O grant it heaven !  
For sure no heavier weight of general woe,  
E'er curs'd a private weakness.

LUCIDORA.

Cruel Eugenio,  
To heap affliction on the sinking head.

BELFORT.

Thy eyes  
Look horrid with a wildness like despair !  
Thou hast been told it all ?

EUGENIO.

All—all.—The groans  
Of a distracted crowd have pour'd it on me.  
But I have news of yet more dreadful weight !  
Bologna is no more ! Good Bentivoglio  
Is mingled with the spirits of the bless'd,  
And in a safer world escapes this sorrow !

BELFORT.

Great ! awful ! terrible ! mysterious power !  
Where will thy vengeance end ?

BELLARIO.

While yet I hear thee,  
Go on, Eugenio.

EUGENIO.

EUGENIO.

Jealous, from strong impresson, that Bernardo,  
 Who, long has envied, long has hated Belfort;  
 In concert with the captive heir of Milan,  
 Might meditate advancement, and avow  
 The faction, he has been observ'd to court—  
 I have with fatal impulse fear'd and watch'd him,  
 In dead of night, a faithful spy alarm'd me,  
 With news, that at his squadron's head he march'd,  
 And left this place in silence—I pursued  
 With fruitless hope to reach Bologna first,  
 And ward off danger, by my interest there:  
 I came in time; but scarce began to hope  
 My fears had been unjust, when horrid news  
 Rang thro' the city that the Duke was met,  
 And murder'd by Bernardo! whose vile name  
 Was echoed in each street with savage joy  
 Bologna's Duke! deliverer! and restorer!  
 And Milan the protector of his state!

BELFORT.

Oh! what a wretch is Belfort!

BELLARIO.

This is too much;

This murder of a father! for, alas!  
 He meant us not the miseries he caus'd us!  
 Offended power! why lingers hated life—  
 While ruin! murder! desolation! add

New

New pangs to my despair ; I feel thee, Death,  
Cold at my heart—yet—had that heart less guilt,  
Thy arrows were less painful. O forgive,  
Forgive me Belfort—Lucidora—Altamira— (*dies.*  
(*Lucidora weeps over Bellario's body.*)

BELFORT.

See, Altamira !  
The bitter fruits of thy unhappy love !  
It blossom'd sweetly, and thy cheated hopes  
Were promis'd that its bloom wou'd last for ever:  
What can'st thou wish ? what state of life becomes  
thee ?  
Go from the world—which has no corner in it  
That will receive thee kindly, but that cloister,  
Whence, had'st thou ne'er been drawn, thou had'st  
been happy.

ALTAMIRA.

I go—but, e'er I take my long last leave,  
Remember, that I once was Altamira—  
And send your blessing with me—

BELFORT.

Take it—and with it—  
(*embracing her.*)

The breaking heart of a weak doating father—  
Who loves thee thro' thy shame—and weeps thy  
ruin—

ALTAMIRA.



ALTAMIRA.

My mother, when she call'd me to the bed  
From whence she breath'd her soul, and left me  
wretched—

Kiss'd me before she died—look'd, weeping at me,  
And gave this tender council:—Altamira—  
Remember, when thou hast no more a mother,  
Be thou thy father's blessing—let him in thee  
Still love my image—and forget to mourn me;  
Chear his declining life;—and should there come  
A time so sad, that thou shou'd'st give him pain,  
Die, to escape the guilt, and find thy mother—  
I promis'd I wou'd keep the dear command,  
And now I must discharge it——

*(stabs herself.*

LUCIDORA.

Angels and Saints!

*(runs to her sister.*

This is too much for nature.

EUGENIO.

Now, Belfort! now,

'Twere cruelty to bid thee think of comfort,

'Till time and resignation calm thy soul.

BELFORT.

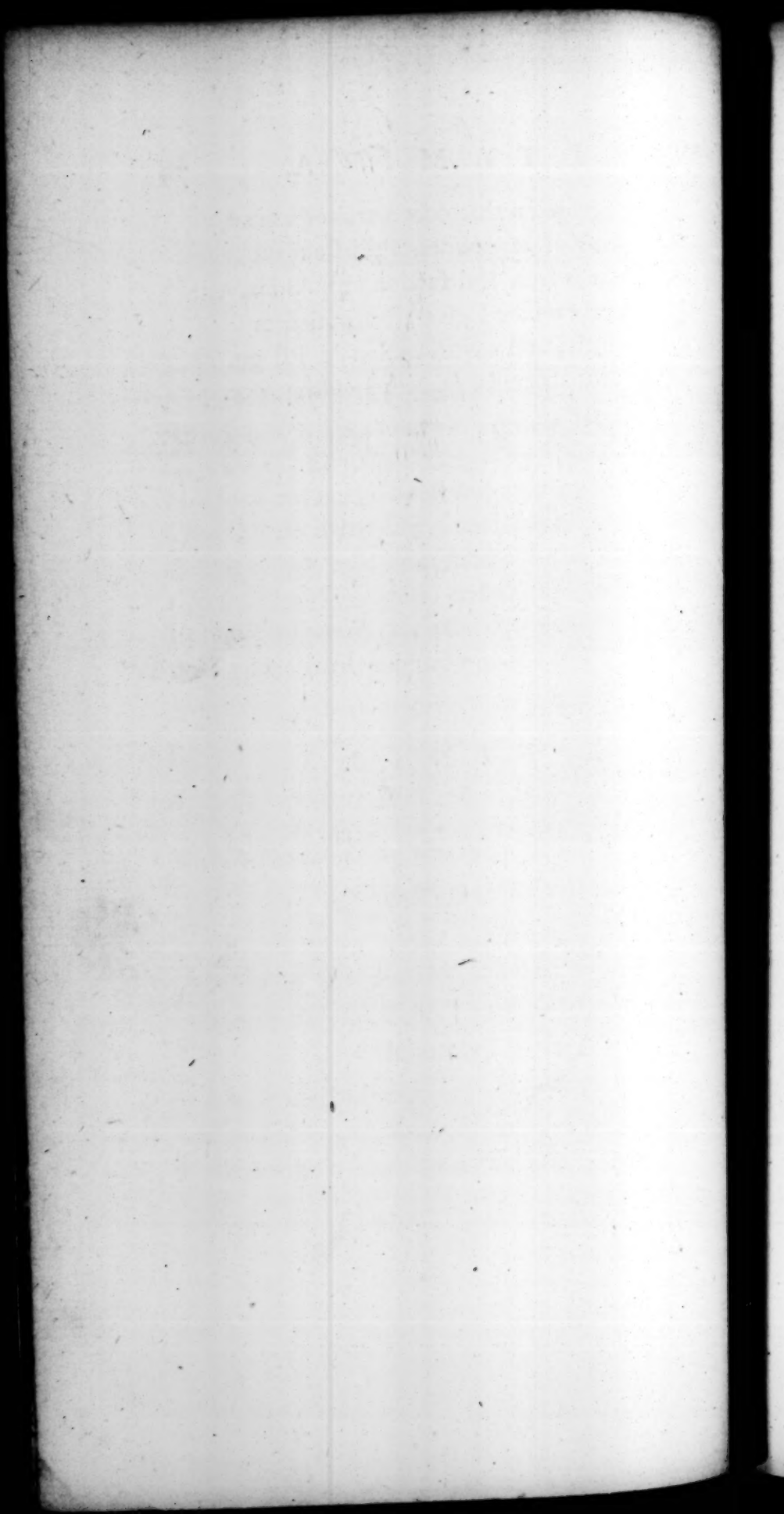
I have one business yet in life to do—  
Old as I am, and wretched as thou see'st me,  
I will not give admission to despair,

'Till



'Till I revenge on that curs'd traitor's head,  
The murder of my master ! 'till Bologna  
Once more is free, and faction crush'd forever !  
Then, to the winds I give all vain desires  
Of happiness, and peace ! distress'd I'll go,  
To the dark, friendly grave, to end my woe.

F I N I S.



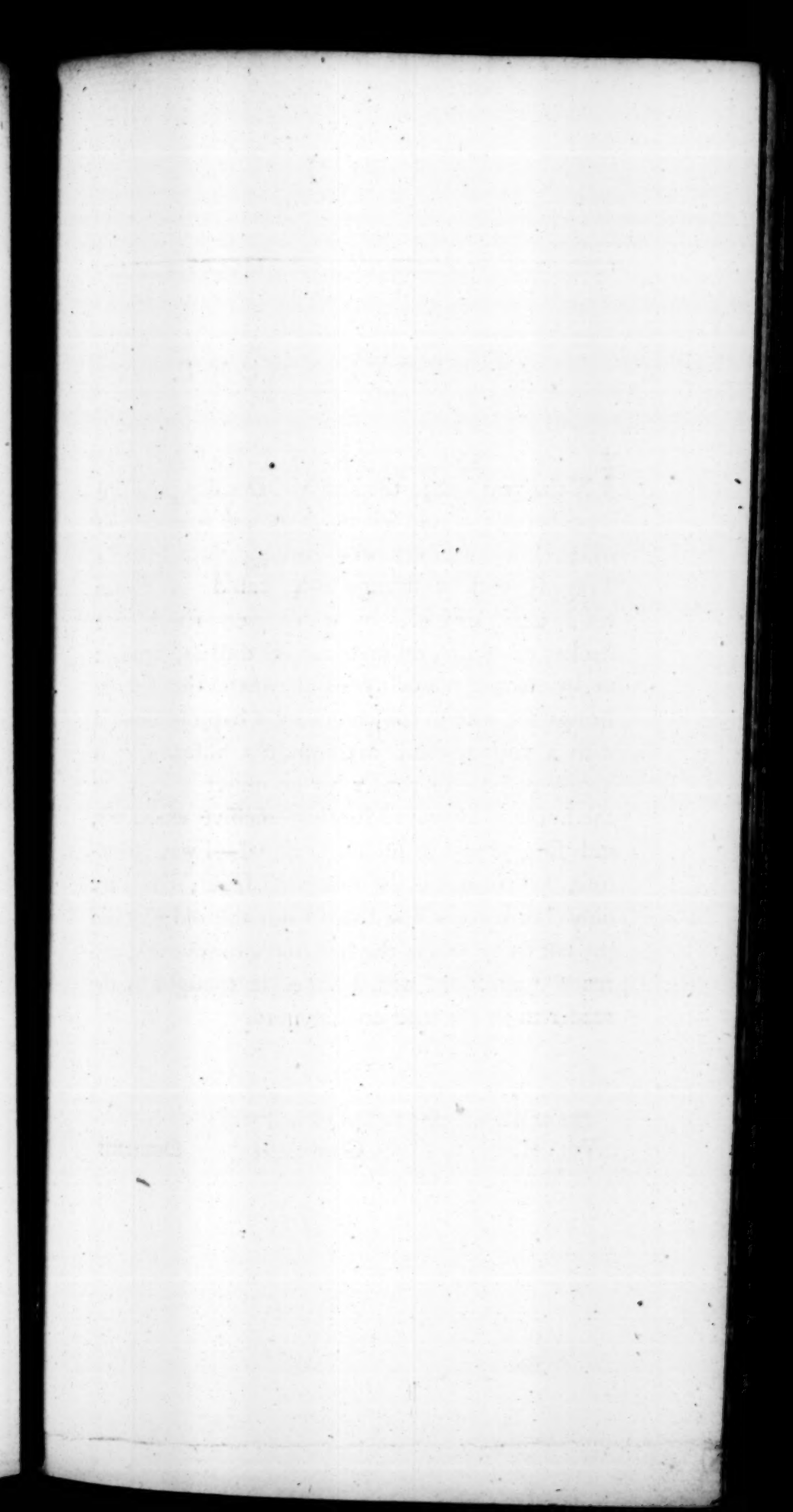
THE  
FATAL ERROR.

A  
TRAGEDY.

VOL. II.

G

FOR



## ADVERTISEMENT.

**I**N the year 1743, the late Mr. Doddsley publish'd his collection of old Plays, in twelve volumes, to which I was a subscriber—Among them I read a Tragedy with a strange title, call'd, *A Woman kill'd with kindness*, in which were several fine strokes of nature, on matrimonial distrests, brought in by female infidelity—But where the seducer brings the wife to consent, who is happily situated with a young, fond, accomplish'd husband, it is hardly possible to render her an object of pity, or the husband approved for his excessive tenderness, and forgiveness to such a criminal—I was, therefore, led to invent the following fable; and have only borrowed a few lines from the old play, in the last scene, where the husband's forgiveness, and renew'd affection, will, I hope, be thought by the reader to be founded on humanity.



## Dramatis Personæ.

### M E N.

Sir CHARLES FRANKFORD.

Lord BELLGROVE.

Mr. CRANMORE.

HUMPHRY.

### W O M E N.

Lady FRANKFORD.

EMELINE.

JULETTA.

FOOTMEN, &c.

SCENE, the HOUSE and GARDEN of Sir CHARLES  
FRANKFORD.

Donatus P. Jones

M. R. M.

FRANKFORD

GROVE

AMORE

W. O. M. R.

FRANKFORD

FRANKFORD

FRANKFORD

FRANKFORD

FRANKFORD

FRANKFORD

FRANKFORD

---

---

T H E  
FATAL ERROR.

---

A C T I.

SCENE, *the* GARDEN.

*Enter CRANMORE alone, (disorder'd.)*

CRANMORE.

I HAVE left my restless bed for this refreshing air---Yon blessed sun, that gladdens all the world, revives not me! Oh, guilt! guilt! what a tormenting fiend, that must for ever tell me I have abused the virtuous wife of my best friend! my benefactor!—(*starting.*)—Thou god of thunder, withhold thy speedy vengeance on a villain! a villain, and a traitor to his fond, believing friend!

G 3

*Enter*

THE NEW YORK

LIBRARY

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

AND OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK

IN THE STATE OF NEW YORK

W. O. M. B. N.

NEW YORK

LIBRARY

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

AND OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

THE NEW YORK

LIBRARY

OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

---

---

T H E

FATAL ERROR.

---

A C T I.

SCENE, *the* GARDEN.

*Enter CRANMORE alone, (disorder'd.)*

CRANMORE.

I HAVE left my restless bed for this refreshing air---Yon blessed sun, that gladdens all the world, revives not me! Oh, guilt! guilt! what a tormenting fiend, that must for ever tell me I have abused the virtuous wife of my best friend! my benefactor!—(*starting.*)—Thou god of thunder, withhold thy speedy vengeance on a villain! a villain, and a traitor to his fond, believing friend!

G 3

*Enter*

86 THE FATAL ERROR.

*Enter* JULETTA.

What has brought you abroad thus early, my fair, my dear associate?—how fares your lady?

JULETTA.

Never was night like the past—when she approach'd her bed-chamber, she gave herself up to horror and distraction—That bed, (she cried) that curst, polluted bed, I'll never enter more! Then Cranmore and Juletta (detested names) were loaded with reproaches—Indeed, Mr. Cranmore, I'd return that purse of gold you seduced me with, and some addition to it, to be safely out of this affair.

CRANMORE.

Fear not, my Juletta; my charming engine of mischief—all will be well—I'll visit her this moment.

JULETTA.

By no means. I left her reposed on the couch—sleep may allay the storm—when she rises you shall have notice, and then all your persuasive powers must be employ'd.

CRANMORE.

On the couch, say you? What! forsake her bed?—This was a night indeed! 'tis worth describing.

JULETTA.

She wore no constant face of sorrow—Her thoughts varied to all extremes of frenzy—sometimes



## THE FATAL ERROR. 87

times blushes spread her cheeks; then, her eye-balls glowing red, she raged aloud, 'till sighs and tears subdued the storm: then her looks appear'd pale and wan, with conscious guilt, and drooping with despair.---Thus hurried with a tide of passions, she shifts the melancholly scene, but cannot give ease to her misery——Indeed it is a piteous sight, and makes me hate myself and you, that was the cause of so much mischief,

CRANMORE.

Oh, 'twas glorious mischief! by which I equal'd Jove when he enjoy'd ALCMENA!

JULETTA.

Ay, Sir: but what say you you to the sudden return of my master? In my Lady's ravings last night she mention'd the speedy return of Sir Charles. "Vengeance (she cried) is at hand!" I fear, upon the discovery, *he* will prove the *thunderer*! For my own part, I tremble at the consequence, and fear even your power to appease her now.

CRANMORE.

Well, my Julietta, we cannot fall alone, she must fall with us; on that is our dependance: But come, my fair engineer, what discovery have you made of the affair between Lord Bellgrove and my sister?

JULETTA.

88 THE FATAL ERROR.

JULETTA.

Why, that love is the subject confess'd on both sides; and that his pursuit is speedy enjoyment. Indeed, Mr. Cranmore, Lord Bellgrove is likely to make sudden reprisals---It cannot be (as Iago says) *Wife for Wife*, but it will be *Sister for Sister*, or I am out in my calculation.

CRANMORE.

He will be disappointed there; Emeline is truly chaste. But however this circumstance may be of service to us at present—I shall make loud complaints to Lady Frankford of my sister's danger—and the wicked designs of her brother, upon a virgin under her protection; may be a plausible excuse for her present disorder.

JULETTA.

Ay, Sir, if you can bring my Lady to make excuses to her husband on his arrival, I shall begin to have hopes of safety. I see your sister in the garden, and making this way—I'll to my post and give you the earliest notice. *(Exit.)*

CRANMORE.

This account of Lady Frankford alarms me—This storm must be appeas'd, or doomsday is near!—What wretches are we when under the influence of ungoverned passions! Tell me *philosophers*, you who can controul these burning, feverish

THE FATAL ERROR. 89

feverish fits of love, by what art you cure the blood of this fiery calenture?

*Enter* EMELINE.

EMELINE.

My brother! and disorder'd! heav'n defend us!

CRANMORE.

Lady Frankford, said you, sister?

EMELINE.

I fear she is:—but it was your disorder that then affected me.—

CRANMORE.

I have *cause*—I fear I *have* a cause.

EMELINE.

Gracious heaven! what has befallen us? Lady Frankford has appear'd to me greatly alter'd for these two or three weeks past—but since the arrival of the last letters from Sir Charles, she has given herself up to grief, and shut even me, her favourite, her usual confidant, from her bed-chamber—this unaccountable alteration in her Ladyship—and your late and present seeming disorder, has brought me from my bed to know the cause! but, my dearest brother, you say, *you have a cause!*

CRAN-

90 THE FATAL ERROR.

CRANMORE.

*You* are the cause ! my dearest sister,

EMELINE.

Am *I*? for heaven's sake explain your self—

CRANMORE.

Explanation I must expect from you, good sister:—however, not to startle you too far, I must tell you I have no fault to charge *you* with:—but I must desire to have a clear and full relation of Lord Bellgrove's conduct and behaviour to you since his first arrival.

EMELINE.

He is young and gay---but upon all occasions polite, and truly well-bred:---in short I can with truth assure you, brother, his behaviour to me in general, has been suitable to *his* quality, and *my* character.

CRANMORE.

And suitable to your *inclination*, sister;---you may safely add that to the account, I dare say---and from thence arises that disquiet:---you describe him as young and gay---We all know that---but I must add, that he is *handsome* and *amorous*---and, I fear, as most young travell'd men of quality are, devoid of almost every principle of virtue, and completely profligate.

EMELINE.

## THE FATAL ERROR. 91

EMELINE.

Indeed, my too suspicious brother---I think---  
nay I will add, I hope you wrong him.

CRANMORE.

Credulity, sister, has been the bane of your sex: Lord Bellgrove has a very engaging person, and a politeness of address, which is nothing more than an agreeable habit acquired by a liberal education, but which wears the appearance of softness and modesty---these are dangerous qualifications to be for ever employing their force against the yielding heart of a virgin:---I say, sister, you must be on your guard; and prepar'd to resist the tempter when he shall think proper to make the attack---which, you may depend on it, will be soon made; it is therefore the duty of a brother to give you this timely caution.

EMELINE.

Thanks, good brother---your opinion of Lord Bellgrove has not a little alarm'd me---I shall be observant.

CRANMORE.

I see him just entering the garden---I think he said last night, that he shou'd rise early, for shooting---I'll go down this walk, and shun him---

EMELINE.



92 THE FATAL ERROR.

EMELINE.

You will not leave me ?

CRANMORE.

He has seen us, and is coming this way---we cannot both avoid him---and I have private business. (Exit.

EMELINE.

Surely, my brother's behaviour is something strange! to alarm me with danger, and then leave me exposed to the enemy---Here he comes.---

*Enter LORD BELLGROVE hastily.*

LORD BELLGROVE.

Is it my Emeline? or some angel that has assumed her form to claim more adoration---'tis she herself! [*taking her respectfully by the hand*] and come abroad thus early to add fresh fragrance to the flowers!

EMELINE.

You are pleas'd to be pleasant my Lord---extravagantly poetical.

LORD BELLGROVE

No rose, nor lily---no hyacinth---are of that sweetness, whiteness, softness, as my Emeline.

EMELINE.



EMELINE.

My good Lord---you are on the very top of the Parnassian hill: if you will descend into the vale of common sense, I shall have no exception to converse with you.

LORD BELLGROVE.

My lovely satyrist! however, my fair critic, you must admit an elevated passion, like mine, shou'd be allowed an elevated stile to convey it.

EMELINE.

Your stile and manner, my Lord, conveys an air of indifference, that I did not expect to be treated with.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Indifference, Madam?

EMELINE.

*Levity*, my Lord, and *indifference*, are nearly allied. Indifference I have no right to complain of, but I must beg your lordship not to mention love or passion to me more, if it must be convey'd with levity, because I must look on such treatment as an insult to my character.

LORD BELLGROVE.

With what a barbarous *English* severity you are pleas'd to censure a little harmless gallantry---Why the ladies I have left in *Italy* and *France*, would have

94 THE FATAL ERROR.

have thought me the worst bred man in the world, if I had address'd them in any other stile, and paid any adoration but to their beauty.

EMELINE.

My Lord, our mode of education (as you know) differs greatly from theirs—The freedoms of good breeding, (as you term it) and gallantry with them, wou'd be esteem'd downright rudeness with us—And if gallantry is your lordship's motive, you must pardon me if I determine never to be alone with you more, *(going.*

LORD BELLGROVE, *(holding her.)*

For heaven's sake go not away with frowns upon that lovely face! I hope I am no intruder, no blaster of a lady's reputation—I ask no special favours—I said harmless gallantry.

EMELINE:

My Lord, you must pardon me—I have seen my error, and shall be wiser *(breaking from him.)*  
Pray give me way. *(Exit.*

LORD BELLGROVE,

*(looking after her.*

*She has seen her error!—*Poor Emeline! that pointed at the matrimonial lover. She is really a fine girl, and right modest; but I have neither gravity enough for the husband, nor wickedness for the debauchee; and though she has treated me with rather too much severity, I can't help approving her conduct.

HUMPHRY

THE FATAL ERROR. 95

HUMPHRY *crossing the Stage, and bowing to Lord BELLGROVE.*

O, Mr. Humphry! come hither; a word with you, Sir—you are the man I wanted to see alone. Why I really think, honest Humphry, you look better, nay younger, than when I left this place three years ago—I wish I cou'd say so much of my sister—Is there any news of her this morning?

HUMPHRY.

I met her woman just now, my Lord, and she told me my Lady's disorder, she thinks, encreases; that she pass'd a very bad night.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Humphry, you have been a very faithful servant, to a very worthy master, and do not want discernment—I think I have observed my sister's *mind* to be as much, if not more, disorder'd than her body; know you of any cause? Be open and candid in your reply—you may depend on my honour that nothing shall transpire from me to your disadvantage.

HUMPHRY.

I never knew, my Lord, from my long acquaintance with the world, a couple so compleatly happy as Sir Charles and Lady Frankford: They were bless'd in themselves, in their beauteous  
little

96 THE FATAL ERROR.

little offspring, and a blessing to their servants and neighbours—but since that unfortunate law-suit which obliged my master to go up to London, a month ago, my Lady (who was much against it) has droop'd and declined in her health and spirits; it has been the longest separation they have known, and my Lady's fears for my master's health have brought on these disorders.

LORD BELLGROVE.

But your master's last letter, I hear, brought not only news of success in his law-suit, but his speedy return home, and yet my sister's disorder encreases—how do you account for that?

HUMPHRY.

My Lady's continual fretting I fear, my Lord, has brought on complaints that may not soon be irradiated.

LORD BELLGROVE.

You see, Humphry, what mischiefs arise from overfond wives: you have wisely escaped them all, and I shall be cautious. Pray do me the favour to order my servants to meet me at the keeper's lodge in the park—it is a fine morning for sporting—I will walk thither. *(Exit.)*

HUMPHRY.

I will, my Lord.—To give my suspicions of the horrid secret in this family, would be neither prudent nor safe—I fear there will be a fatal discovery at the arrival of my poor master. *(Exit.)*

SCENE

SCENE, LADY FRANKFORD'S *Apartment.*

*Enter* JULETTA.

JULETTA.

My Lady is up, and in such a humour! her sleep, if she had any, has only given her strength to vent her fury at me—for my part, I am driven to the very extent of my patience, and can bear such treatment no longer—I have her in my power, and can take my revenge, on her, when I please.—here she comes—

*Enter* LADY FRANKFORD.

LADY FRANKFORD.

Out of my sight, thou hideous monster!—thou perfidious trust-breaker! thou betrayer of my innocence!

JULETTA.

Do not provoke me further, Madam—let me alone—I shall but vex your Ladyship.

LADY FRANKFORD.

Blush, wretch, blush! have you no shame left?



98 THE FATAL ERROR.

JULETTA.

Blush ! for what, Madam ?—I knew Mr. Cranmore's violent passion, and your Ladyship's coyness, wanted an assisting friend ; and did I not convey your lover to his bliss, to all his soul held dear ?

LADY FRANKFORD.

This impudence to my face—leave me—avoid my sight—what do I suffer, for being so weak not to alarm the house, the world ! at my first injury ? fool, fool—then to be frighten'd with the loss of my honor, and by that insinuating villain sooth'd to silence !—yet rather than to be thus threaten'd—perish both life and honor—devil ! thus I dare thy worst—proclaim all thou know'st, or thy worst malice can invent, and to thy utmost blast me—

*Enter* CRANMORE.

CRANMORE.

Amazement ! a voice so loud, and in your Ladyship's sick chamber, made me an intruder ! what can be the cause ?

LADY FRANKFORD.

Ask your own base heart—and that wicked engine of your villainy—who has dared to ruin me,  
and



THE FATAL ERROR. 99

and now upbraids me with it—but Sir Charles is coming, I shall have ample vengeance---

JULETTA.

---Your Ladyship must suffer with us—

*(Lady Frankford falls on the couch in tears and distraction)*

CRANMORE.

How's this, Julietta? begone instantly—leave the room—no reply—begone—*[Exit Julietta. (addressing Lady Frankford)* I am sorry Madam—heartily grieved for this accident:—these low-bred people, when they are trusted with a secret, are too apt to be unmannerly—but rest assured, dear Lady Frankford, she shall trouble you no more; I'll make her heartily repent of her rude behaviour, and bring her on her knees, for this insolence,—believe me, Madam—she shall offend no more.

LADY FRANKFORD.

O Sir—she, and you, and every thing offends me now—away, away, I'll hear no more—I am lost for ever—I have a noble husband—your friend—your much-lov'd, valued friend! can you bear that sound? O most ungrateful Cranmore!—remember, when first you dared to avow your guilty passion—I made you shudder at your baseness—your ingratitude shock'd you—and to obtain my

H 2

pardon

100 THE FATAL ERROR.

pardon, solemnly swore you were sincerely penitent.

CRANMORE.

Dear Lady Frankford be patient---beware---and save your honor !

LADY FRANKFORD.

My honor ! thou hast murder'd it !——I was born of noble parents ; had a noble name ; all thou hast murder'd : look, perjur'd man, on her whom you have ruin'd !

CRANMORE.

Curse the first cause ! the witchcraft that seduced me ! curse those bright eyes, and all that heaven of beauty, that baffled all weak reason could advance---but leave these lamentations, these upbraidings---think of your safety---suppose we have erred——yet the blackest may be washed white again.

LADY FRANKFORD.

Never.

CRANMORE.

Are we not mortals ? allied to all infirmities ? the best may deviate from the thorny paths of virtue ! must we be lost ? is there not an effectual medicine call'd Repentance—and a sovereign balsam for the wound, call'd Mercy ?

LADY

## THE FATAL ERROR. 101

LADY FRANKFORD.

Not for us! O we have sinn'd beyond it! ingratitude! the worst of crimes.

CRANMORE.

Speak that no more—your words are daggers to me! we are then lost for ever—I desire to perish—I have sinn'd beyond redemption! I do confess it—go tell your husband, I have injured my friend! the best of men—a worthy gentleman—he must kill me!—shame, death, reproach! for your dear sake I have encounter'd all these perils, and had I not involved your matchless worth in the same fate with me, I could die content.

LADY FRANKFORD.

O, Sir, women, like me, not quite bereft of modesty, have their crimes written in their faces! I need not tell it—my injur'd husband will read it there---you move me to pity you: with what contradictions am I tortur'd?---the love I bear my husband is as precious as my soul's health! how then can I say I pity you? *(weeps.*

CRANMORE.

Come, dry those tears---for every drop you shed, draws from my heart a drop of blood! dear Lady---not only pity, but forgive me---let us live a life of mutual penitence—come, banish from

H 3

that

102 THE FATAL ERROR.

that lovely brow all looks of sorrow—resume your wonted cheerfulness to meet Sir Charles—and all is well.

LADY FRANKFORD.

Were it possible, I would do much to save him from affliction—he shou'd be happy—

CRANMORE.

His happiness or misery depends on you alone! think well on that!—your little blooming infants, think on them! all, all depend on your behaviour at this approaching crisis! all these innocents must be involved in the general ruin, if, by your mistaken conduct, you make the least discovery.

LADY FRANKFORD.

Well, dissimulation is a hard task—but for their dear sakes, I wou'd do much:—I have forfeited my own happiness, but will do every thing in my power to preserve theirs.

CRANMORE.

Wisely resolved. And now permit me, my dear Lady Frankford, to point out another object of your care and protection, my poor sister Emeline!—you see, Madam, the wanton God of Love is never idle!—your brother, Lord Bellgrove, made so open, and so warm an attack in the orange grove this morning, that poor Emeline escaped from

from him with some difficulty, and is determined never to be alone with him more:—but since I have reason to fear his Lordship's agreeable person and accomplishments have made some impression in his favor, I really think, notwithstanding my sister's good resolutions, without your kind interposition, there may be danger.

LADY FRANKFORD.

Gracious heaven! this is a new affliction—where is Emeline?

CRANMORE.

I know she is in readiness to wait on you—I'll send for her—O—here she is.

*Enter* EMELINE.

EMELINE.

I rejoice to see your Ladyship so much compos'd—you look much better than when we parted yesterday—it gives me great pleasure.

LADY FRANKFORD.

I am much indebted to the tenderness and affection of my dear girl—but I am griev'd to hear my wild brother has offended you---pray, my dear, keep out of his way—those gay young fellows are triflers, you must not believe one word they say; and when  
they



104 THE FATAL ERROR.

they pretend to be grave, and in earnest, they are then most dangerous.

EMELINE.

I thank you, Madam, for your good advice, which I shall carefully observe—but there's no danger—my Lord Bellgrove is, I fear, a trifler—but I am seldom in a humour to be trifled with.

LADY FRANKFORD.

I hope he could not so far forget himself, as to offer the least degree of rudeness to a young lady of your appearance and character! if he did, Sir Charles, at his return, shall know it—who will not only protect you, but resent it properly.

EMELINE.

His Lordship is too well bred, Madam, to offer rudeness to any one; and the only concern I am under, is, least my Lord, or your Ladyship should think some indiscretion in my conduct, or levity in my behaviour, has given him encouragement to treat me with too great freedom.

LADY FRANKFORD.

Your conduct, my dear, is, I am sure, at all times unblameable—would to heaven we could all say so!

*(sighing.)*

*Enter*



THE FATAL ERROR. 105

Enter HUMPHRY,

*(Presenting a Letter to Lady Frankford.)*

HUMPHRY.

This letter for your Ladyship came enclos'd in one to me, from my dear master—who is in health, and will be here to dinner. *(Exit.*

*(Lady Frankford lays the letter unopen'd on the table.)*

EMELINE.

Blest news! how I rejoice to think your Ladyship's fears are at an end---and, I hope, every disorder that has afflicted you.

CRANMORE.

Amen, to that good hope. But, sister, I presume at this juncture, Lady Frankford may have business and wou'd chuse to be alone. *(Aside to Lady Frankford)* I will see Juletta, Madam, and settle that affair to your satisfaction

*(Exit Cranmore and Emeline.)*

LADY FRANKFORD.

*(Looking at the letter lying on the table.)*

What delight, even in the shortest absence, has a letter from that dear hand given me? and now—how I tremble at the sight of it! what horror  
seizes

106 THE FATAL ERROR.

seizes me at the thoughts of breaking that seal! O guilt, guilt! what a dreadful apparition! every fond word that used to cheer my heart, will now be daggers to it!—but I have deserved to suffer—*(breaking open the letter.)* let them pierce me.

*(Reads trembling.)*

“ DEAREST, BEST BELOV’D,

“ This envious post will out-run me—I

“ follow with a lover’s haste, to the arms

“ of my adorable wife. C. F.”

*(dropping the letter.)*

Destruction has envelop’d me!—where can I hide me from him? this house will shake to shelter me! O undone, undone for ever.

*(Runs off in distraction.)*

*End of the FIRST ACT.*

A C T II.

SCENE, *the HALL.*

*Enter HUMPHRY.*

HUMPHRY.

**T**HIS house is in strange confusion! just now Mr. Cranmore and Juletta came from my Lady's apartment, Juletta in tears!—What a reception will my poor master meet with, who is every moment expected!—Here, John! Anthony! Where are you, varlets? (*Enter two Servants.*) Be ready, lads; keep a look out in the avenue, and give me notice when Sir Charles is in sight. (*they go out.*) I am full of horrid suspicions of that wicked couple—If I, who am innocent, can't help trembling, what must the guilty do?

*Enter*

108 THE FATAL ERROR.

*Enter one of the FOOTMEN, running.*

FOOTMAN.

My master's post-chaise is just entering the gates.

*Enter SIR CHARLES, hastily.*

SIR CHARLES.

How fares it, Humphry? where's your mistress?

HUMPHRY.

In her chamber, Sir, and I fear me indispos'd. Lord Bellgrove is arrived, Sir, from his travels, and has been here these three days.

SIR CHARLES.

My brother! that's good news. *(Exit.*

*Enter Servants bringing in trunks, &c.*

HUMPHRY.

Well, honest Richard, how does London look?

RICHARD.

Look, Master Humphry, why 'tis not the same place you and I saw it three years ago, when our master was married there—why you would think there was an end of trade—why all the fine signs are taken away, and the streets are all made fit to ride races on—'Ecod, they are all gentlefolks I think now-a-days in London; why almost every one keeps coaches and chariots there—

If

THE FATAL ERROR. 109

If I had staid a little longer among the fine wenches, in my conscience I believe I shou'd have made my fortune.

HUMPHRY.

Or marr'd it, Richard—But if you are return'd safe and sound, blest your good stars, and get yourself clean for dinner. *(Exit Servants.)*

*Enter* LORD BELLGROVE.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Humphry, is Sir Charles arrived?

HUMPHRY.

Yes, my Lord.

LORD BELLGROVE.

And in good health, I hope?

HUMPHRY.

He looks very well, my Lord—he hardly staid a moment with me, but flew up to my Lady.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Well, I'll to my chamber, change my dress, and wait on him.

*(Exit hastily, Humphry following.)*

[SCENE



110 THE FATAL ERROR.

SCENE, a PARLOUR.

*Enter CRANMORE, followed by EMELINE.*

EMELINE.

I am heartily rejoiced to hear Sir Charles is arrived in good health and spirits—I hope we shall all now recover our usual cheerfulness, for Lady Frankford's strange, unaccountable disorder of late has made us all very unhappy. (*Looking at Cranmore.*) You look melancholly, brother, on this joyful occasion.

CRANMORE.

Did you not observe that impertinent puppy, Lord Bellgrove, how he rush'd by us? Does he think his freedoms with you, are to entitle him to take unmannerly freedoms with me?

EMELINE.

Dear brother, no more of this—I have told you Lord Bellgrove's freedoms with me are at an end; and there is no reason to doubt but he will (for his own sake) behave, at all times, like a gentleman.

CRANMORE.

Very well; I see you retain your good opinion of him—but I shall watch him carefully, and, if I see occasion, teach him manners.

EMELINE.



## THE FATAL ERROR. III

EMELINE.

Well, brother, be careful to wait for the occasion.

*Enter* SIR CHARLES.

(*He runs and salutes Emeline.*)

SIR CHARLES.

My dear Emeline! (*turning to Cranmore*) Cranmore, my valued friend! (*embracing him*) had I been so happy to have found Lady Frankford in health, how blest shou'd I be in thus embracing my friends! but, alas! my interview with her has shock'd me almost to death! she fainted in my arms—I call'd her maid to her, but she asks earnestly for Emeline to help her—Run to her, my dear Emeline (*She runs off.*) This was the severest blow that fate cou'd give me! My dear Cranmore, to what can it be owing? Know you of any cause? (*Cranmore looks confused.*) In all her letters of late she complain'd of lowness of spirits, and dejection, but nothing more.

CRANMORE.

That was her tenderness to you, Sir—Lady Frankford has been extremely ill—but her fear of afflicting you with the account, I presume, made her silent.

SIR

## 112 THE FATAL ERROR.

SIR CHARLES.

Perhaps so—but was any help sent for?

CRANMORE.

I propos'd it—but she forbid it.

SIR CHARLES.

That's strange! did not you think so? You must think so, unless you knew a cause.

*(Cranmore looks greatly confused.)*

CRANMORE.

Why, Sir, I must own, but with reluctance, there is a collateral cause that has hurt her ladyship greatly.

SIR CHARLES.

Dear Cranmore, tell me instantly.

CRANMORE.

Why, Sir, the fear of your ill health (which your lady settled would be the certain consequence of your ill success in your law-suit) was the beginning of her disorders—and an accident that very lately happen'd, has, I fear, completed it: The conduct of her brother, Lord Bellgrove, to my sister Emeline, whom he fixed on, and settled as a prey to his loose desires. You will conclude, Sir Charles, that nothing but my great regard for you, and your family, could keep me quiet, on such a provoking occasion; but when I consider'd whose brother he was, and whose house

I was

## THE FATAL ERROR. 113

I was in, I stifled my resentment, and left the affair entirely to Lady Frankford.

SIR CHARLES.

I am extremely sorry to hear this on every account—But, Cranmore, you have acted like a sensible, well-deserving friend, and I am highly oblig'd to you for it: rest assured I shall resent it properly; injured virtue shall never want protection in my house. This young Lord shall not only regulate his behaviour, but repent what he has done, or depart directly—No ties of blood shall influence me when virtue and honour are concern'd.

CRANMORE.

Your adherence, Sir Charles, to the principles of strict justice and honour, is unquestion'd—I thank you, Sir, for this fresh instance of your friendship, and will hasten to make my sister happy.

*(Exit.)*

SIR CHARLES.

What insolent liberties these young men of quality indulge themselves in! as if title and fortune gave them privilege to insult all they think beneath them—but as such noble profligates are generally born fools, they are, of course, strangers to the happy laws of their country, by which the subjects of England are protected in their persons and property! What a glorious constitution!

VOL. II.

I

*Enter*

114 THE FATAL ERROR.

*Enter* LORD BELLGROVE, *running to embrace*

SIR CHARLES.

LORD BELLGROVE.

My dear Sir Charles ! I give you joy of your success, and safe arrival.

SIR CHARLES,

*(embracing him coldly.*

I thank you, my Lord ; and hope to have an opportunity of congratulating you, in return, on *your success* from your travels—but of that I am yet to learn.

LORD BELLGROVE.

I have seen the world, Sir—and, I hope, among all my foibles, that *vanity* will be the least conspicuous—But, my dear brother, you seem as much alter'd in your person, and manner, as my sister—When I left you both, it was the honeymoon indeed ; who so gay, so happy as Sir Charles and Lady Frankford ? and, at my return, in three short years, who so alter'd ?—Is it the effect of matrimony ? if it is, I shall learn to avoid a situation so very mortifying.

SIR CHARLES.

When we are at the summit of happiness, the alteration must be for the worse—But pray, my Lord, since you learn me to be quick-sighted,  
give

## THE FATAL ERROR. 115

me leave to observe, that you went abroad a young man, among many good qualities, very remarkable for your modesty—I hope you have not exchang'd that for any foreign accomplishment?

LORD BELLGROVE.]

Your observation, Sir Charles, does not convey an air of over-much civility. Pray, Sir, have I given any cause for bringing my want of modesty in question?

SIR CHARLES.

Why, to confess the truth, my Lord, I am told you have—and that not only your modesty, but your morals are brought in question.—I am sensible of the great allowance that shou'd be given to the levity of youth; but where an attack is made upon a young lady of unquestion'd virtue and merit, the insult is not only shameful, but, from a man of quality and breeding, almost unpardonable:—This charge is brought against your Lordship, and I am sorry to add, has been no small affliction to your sister.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Sir, I hope I shall be as ready at all times to answer any charge, and to support my conduct, as I am at this moment—this severe attack is as unjust as unexpected. I must own, by way of



# 116 THE FATAL ERROR.

amusement only, I have taken some harmless freedoms with a young Lady I found in this family. Pray, Sir Charles, what can be the subject, when a young fellow and an engaging young Lady are left alone, which was often the case, but love? was not that, not only your opinion, but your practice in your younger days?—I must here, Sir, beg leave to disclaim all intentions of mischief; and the least attempt, or desire, to exceed the bounds of modesty; I only meant, by a little harmless gallantry, to give the Lady a fair opportunity to shew her virtuous disposition, which gave me pleasure, and not pain from any disappointment I met with. But, pray, Sir Charles, I think I have a right to know my accuser?—To bring so heavy a charge before you the moment of your arrival, is somewhat alarming!—You have seen your wife, and, I suppose, Mr. Cranmore and his sister?

SIR CHARLES.

I have seen them all.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Sir, was the fair Emeline the complainant?

SIR CHARLES.

I have not talk'd with her on the subject.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Then, Sir Charles, I must beg leave to *insist* on knowing the person: if it had been the young Lady



## THE FATAL ERROR. 117

Lady, it would have been so notorious that I shou'd have took it as a signal to pursue her—but, on my honour, I think Miss Emeline truly virtuous, sensible, and accomplish'd.---If my sister was the informer, she must have been grossly abused---but if it was Mr. Cranmore, he must be either an absurd fool, or a villain---rest assured, Sir Charles, I am determin'd to be satisfied, and to justify my character.

SIR CHARLES. (*confused.*)

Well, my Lord, it is but fitting, no doubt; every man of honour shou'd justify his character: But you young men are apt to be too warm in your proceedings---I beg your Lordship will leave the conduct of this enquiry to me---you shall have justice done you---and nothing would give me greater pleasure then to see my dear brother acquit himself with honour. Perhaps a day or two may explain matters---I beg you will leave it to me, my Lord.

LORD BELLGROVE.

When Sir Charles Frankford wears his former friendly face, I can deny him nothing.

SIR CHARLES.

My dear Lord, (*embracing him.*) pardon me--- I fear I was to blame---but the shock I received at the interview with your sister, who fainted in my arms,

## 118 THE FATAL ERROR.

arms, and this report, which was hinted as adding to her disorders, made me very unfit for a meeting with my dear Lord Bellgrove after so long an absence.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Well, Sir Charles, I submit this affair to you; but, believe me, there is something strange and mystical in it, which must be explain'd---as to my sister, I found her the most alter'd woman both in person and mind, I ever knew; that cheerfulness and natural ease and good humour, which so charmingly distinguish'd her, all chang'd to melancholly, discontent, and love of solitude: But I have not paid her my usual daily visit.

SIR CHARLES,

*(pulling out his watch.*

Sir, 'tis three o'clock---you must defer seeing her 'till after dinner, which I see now carrying in. Pray make my apology to the company, for I dine above with Lady Frankford---but let me beg you, my Lord, not to mention the least word of what has pass'd between us to your sister, nor to the parties you are going to, at least not with resentment; that wou'd frustrate the design I have in view---leave the conduct of it to me, I beg, my Lord.

SIR

THE FATAL ERROR. 119

LORD BELLGROVE.

Sir Charles, in this, as in every action of my life, I shall esteem it my happiness to be directed by you.

SIR CHARLES.

My Lord, you do me honour. (*Exit Lord Bel.*) (*pausing.*) What an accomplish'd youth! how improv'd! how sensible has been his conduct, and remarks, which throws me into the greatest perplexity! Who waits there?

*Enter a Servant.*

Send Humphry hither. (*Exit Servant.*) As Lord Bellgrove very justly observed, there is something strangely mystical in this affair which wants explaining: (*musing.*) And his remark that he found my wife greatly alter'd at his arrival, plainly shews there was a more severe first cause.

*Enter HUMPHRY.*

Humphry, has there any thing material happen'd in your affairs, during my absence?

HUMPHRY.

Nothing, Sir: my accounts are ready to be laid before your Honour whenever you please to receive them.

SIR CHARLES.

I have had long experience of your integrity, and doubt not the rectitude of your accounts---  
but

120 THE FATAL ERROR.

but I am sorry to find the health and quiet of my family so much disturb'd, during my absence!-- Those, honest Humphry, I am afraid, were not under your care---When I went hence, this was the seat of health and cheerfulness---and in one month those valuable blessings are exchang'd for sickness and complainings! I meet no face in my house but seems infected with sorrow! know you of any accident that could have occasion'd it?

HUMPHRY.

My Lady's fears for you---and your long absence, Sir---but your happy return will, I hope, soon restore health and peace again.

SIR CHARLES.

I hope so too---Humphry, I shall dine above with my wife---give the butler notice of this,  
(*Exit Humphry.*)

When we are alone I may be able to make some calm enquiries, that may give light into this affair of Lord Bellgrove---but the fear I am under of the return of those fainting fits distract me! (*pausing and breaking into rapture.*) When I left my wife, beauty was her least endowment! duty and chaste desires compos'd such an harmony of sweetness, as made me truly blest!--good Heaven restore me to that envied situation!  
(*Exit,*)

SCENE,

THE FATAL ERROR. 121

SCENE, *the Dining Parlour.*

LORD BELLGROVE, MR. CRANMORE, and  
EMELINE *discover'd at a table, with bottles  
glasses and fruit. Servants going out with  
things, as dinner is just over.*

EMELINE, (*rising.*)

As Lady Frankford made me promise to come  
to her as soon as dinner was over, no other apo-  
logy is necessary for taking my leave. [Exit.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Come, Mr. Cranmore, give me your toast—the  
first woman in the county.

CRANMORE.

My Lord, then I must give you Lady Frank-  
ford.

LORD BELLGROVE,

I thank you, Sir. I once thought her so  
myself—but the cares of matrimony have  
strangely alter'd her—Here's to the recovery of  
her health—(*They drink.*) And now, Sir, since  
you have done so much honor to my sister—  
you must fill a bumper to my toast, which I  
can give with more justice as to youth and beau-  
ty:—Sir, here's the very agreeable Miss Eme-  
line—



122 THE FATAL ERROR.

line---(*they drink.*) I was very much concern'd to hear from Sir Charles Frankford, that my behaviour to that young lady should be so grossly misrepresented;---if Miss Emeline had taken the least umbrage at any inadvertency of mine, I am sure I should readily have asked her pardon; if she had not (as I am sure I never intentionally gave her cause) what must I say of the reporter of so much malice?---If a female, she was invidious; if a man, he must be a sinner himself of the first magnitude!---for surely a heedless young fellow may behave with too much levity, without the least intention of villainy; for an attempt to seduce, and insult a virtuous young lady, can deserve no other name.

CRANMORE. (*smiling contemptuously.*)

My Lord, young men are too often deceived in their intentions---nay, even innocent familiarities are sometimes attended with dangerous consequences, and shou'd be prevented by every one acquainted with the failings of human nature;---I own, my Lord, I speak with the experience of a sinner, though not of the first magnitude---and since your Lordship has introduced the subject, I must beg leave to tell you, that your behaviour to my sister this morning in the garden, was something too free for your short acquaintance!---and, admitting your Lordship to be without villainous intentions---I am sorry to observe, you were also without  
that

## THE FATAL ERROR. 123

that politeness which is due to Emeline's birth and education.

LORD BELLGROVE. (*smiling.*)

Sir, I shou'd be glad to have the honour to be your pupil, since you are so good a judge of politeness, and so *experienc'd* in love affairs---however, after begging the young lady's pardon, I shall be careful to transgress no more :---for I freely acknowledge Miss Emeline deserves all the respect due to virtue and beauty.---But, Sir, since you have this boasted experience, you must admit that my situation here, at my time of life, must be a little unpleasant, if I must be deprived of every female to pass a lively hour with :---and, as I confess, I have no thoughts of matrimony, my sister's waiting maid, the smart Juletta, should have been my choice, if I had not found her unluckily pre-engaged.

CRANMORE.

Juletta engag'd, my Lord?

LORD BELLGROVE,

And, if I have any discernment, to the *experienc'd* Mr. Cranmore!

CRANMORE. (*confus'd.*)

Juletta engag'd to me! I must deny it indeed, my Lord---and do here declare your Lordship has  
my

124 THE FATAL ERROR.

my free consent to make your attack whenever you please---

LORD BELLGROVE.

I am glad to hear it---and accept your offer...

*Enter* HUMPHRY.

HUMPHRY.

Sir Charles sends his compliments to your Lordship, and Mr. Cranmore, and desires your company.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Good Humphry, return my compliments--I am going to my chamber to write letters for this post---when I have done, I will wait on them.

(*Exit.*

CRANMORE.

My compliments, Mr. Humphry, I will wait on them directly. (*Exit Humphry.*

That pert young Lord is gone away barely civil---I don't like this last motion---I must see Juletta instantly, and tell her of his intentions, which I have too much reason to fear will not be disagreeable to her; and from thence dangers may arise! for this prevailing, discerning young Lord may work her to a discovery---I must see her directly and take proper measures.

*Enter*

*Enter JULETTA softly, looking about.*

JULETTA.

Sir, Sir, I have been watching for an opportunity of seeing you alone, to inform you of my fears.

CRANMORE.

Well——what are they?

JULETTA.

Why, Sir, Mr. Humphry met me alone, and dropp'd hints of the mischief he fear'd I had been engag'd in during the absence of Sir Charles—I fear he knows what has happen'd; if so, we are undone——and indeed, Sir, by my Lady's behaviour at her meeting Sir Charles, I fear we are inevitably ruined!

CRANMORE.

Well——and I can tell you of another eminent danger, likely to arise from yourself.

JULETTA. (*crying.*)

Lord, Sir, you fright me.

CRANMORE.

Lord Bellgrove has fixed his choice on you;  
and determined just now to toy away an hour with  
you

## 126 THE FATAL ERROR.

you, as he calls it—but mark me, Juletta; I warn you against an intrigue there! especially as our affairs are circumstanc'd—depend on it you meet instant death from my hand, if I find you inclining to yield to him! I know my life is forfeited on a discovery! but if I find you in the least accessary, you shall die before me.

JULETTA. (*crying and trembling.*)

Lord, Sir, you frighten me to death! I will do every thing as you direct me!

CRANMORE.

Well, very well—come Juletta, recover your spirits—be but observant to my directions, and all may yet be safe:—I hope some interval will happen before night to give me an interview alone with Lady Frankford, whom I doubt not to prevail on her to recover her peace of mind, and then all our fears will subside—begone—watch for that blest opportunity, and give me notice. [*Exit Juletta.*

(*Cranmore thoughtful.*) I am apt to think my fate draws near a crisis! and that life or death depend on the cast of the dye!—(*pausing.*) Men say, Gold does all! engages all—works through all dangers! now I say, Beauty can do more!—the King's Exchequer cou'd not draw me through half the dangers, the irresistible charms of this woman have made me leap into!

(*Exit.*)

*End of the SECOND ACT.*



A C T III.

SCENE, *An Anti-chamber, in LADY FRANKFORD'S Apartment.*

*Enter SIR CHARLES, leading in LADY FRANKFORD, followed by EMILINE.*

SIR CHARLES.

I INDEED, my dear, I think this is the pleasanter room, (*seating Lady Frankford.*) Come, my love, endeavour to recover your former cheerfulness; since I have had the good fortune to return not only in health, but successful, crown that success with all I want on earth to compleat my happiness—your smiles!—If I can't be your physician, I will immediately send out for aid, and remain unblest till health is restored to you.

LADY

128 THE FATAL ERROR.

LADY FRANKFORD.

Indeed, Sir Charles, your lov'd presence has greatly relieved me.

*Enter CRANMORE, bowing respectfully to*  
LADY FRANKFORD, *who appears confus'd.*

SIR CHARLES.

Cranmore, I must call you to account, Sir! I left you here Maitre de Hotel, and you have suffered Lady Frankford to loose all her health and spirits in my absence.

CRANMORE.

If Lady Frankford was not the sufferer, Sir Charles, I could bear the reproach with great tranquillity.

SIR CHARLES.

Ay, so says your sister Emeline—she can bear my raillery with great tranquillity too---though she owns it was not the rudeness of Lord Bellgrove's address, but the powerful effect it had on her, that made her fly for protection, from so charming an invader.

EMELINE.

Nay now, Sir Charles, how can you be so provoking?

SIR

THE FATAL ERROR. 129

SIR CHARLES.

Indeed, my dear Emeline, I have talk'd with his Lordship on this subject; and by the disposition I found him in, and the respectful sentiments he express'd of you, I think it will be your own fault, if you don't, like a skilful jockey, break him of his wild flights, and make him go quiet in the trammels of matrimony.

EMELINE.

Indeed, Sir Charles, the difficulty of that task, as well as the honour, would be too great for me.

*Enter* HUMPHRY.

HUMPHRY.

Sir John Woodfield is below to wait on your honor—he says, he has just now received letters, the contents of which he must communicate to you.

SIR CHARLES.

I am extremely sorry for this accident—I must wait on Sir John, but will dispatch him as soon as possible.

(*Exit with Humphry.*)

CRANMORE.

Come, my dear Lady Frankford, you see the happy disposition of mind, and gaiety of temper Sir Charles is blest with, which I hope will inspire

VOL. II.

K

you

130 THE FATAL ERROR.

you with a desire to do your best to support it.  
(*takes her by the hand.*) You look pale! how do  
you, madam?

LADY FRANKFORD.

O sick, sick, sick—pray give me air. (*she  
rises.*) Let me entreat you to withdraw, and leave  
me alone---I have a severe pain in my head---let  
me compose myself in this short absence of Sir  
Charles---a little rest may relieve me.

EMELINE.

Pray heaven it may.

CRANMORE. (*Aside*)

This may be the fortunate juncture---I'll find  
Juletta. (*Exit Emeline and Cranmore.*)

LADY FRANKFORD.

Said I my head? O 'tis my heart---there's the  
incurable wound!---When I but think of my dear  
husband's love---his excessive fondness! how can  
I think of murdering him with a confession of my  
wrongs? that strikes a terror, like the lightnings  
flash, that scorches up my blood!---yet, can I  
bring pollution to his bed?--O fie, fie, that is  
impossible!---O happy wives! you who have kept  
your matrimonial vow unstain'd, make me your  
sad example. O beware! beware! beware!

(*Exit.*)

SCENE

THE FATAL ERROR. 131

SCENE, LORD BELLGROVE's Chamber.

LORD BELLGROVE *discover'd at a table, sealing his Letters.*

Enter JULETTA *softly with fear and terror.*

JULETTA. (*in a trembling tone.*)

My Lord!

LORD BELLGROVE.

(*Starting, runs to her and catches her by the hand.*)

My dear Julietta!

JULETTA. (*falling on her knee.*)

My Lord, I beg your protection.

LORD BELLGROVE.

You surprize me, Julietta! protect you! depend on it I will protect you with my life! but tell me, where's the danger?

JULETTA.

From Mr. Cranmore! he has threaten'd to kill me! indeed, my Lord, I deserve to die, but not by his hand.

LORD



132 THE FATAL ERROR.

LORD BELLGROVE.

You amaze me, Julietta ! pri'thee rise—O---I suppose he repents of the liberty he granted me, and is downright jealous of you.

JULETTA.

Oh, no, my Lord---there is a more fatal cause, in which, by his wicked artifice, he has seduced me to be a shameful agent.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Good heavens ! what fatal cause ?

JULETTA.

I have betray'd the best of mistresses to his ungovern'd passions---I have long repented of it---and am now resolved to make a full discovery ! I fear'd that villain Cranmore would have kill'd me to prevent it, which has brought me to your Lordship's feet for protection.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Amazement ! horror ! I am thunderstruck !---my sister's honor injur'd by that villain Cranmore !  
—Hear me, woman ! there must be further proof before I step into this scene of mischief !

JULETTA.

My Lord, Mr. Cranmore is just now gone to my Lady, to obtain a short interview with her, now Sir Charles and you are both engag'd---He is now in

THE FATAL ERROR. 133

her apartment—I know a private way to conduct you, where you may over-hear what will remove all doubt of the truth of what I have related.

LORD BELLGROVE.

Away, away,—I'll follow you. (*Exeunt.*)

SCENE, LADY FRANKFORD'S apartment.

LADY FRANKFORD *seated on a couch,*  
CRANMORE *kneeling by her.*

CRANMORE.

On my knee I beg you for the last time—remember both our fates depend on your present conduct—a recovery of your spirits, and a cheerful behaviour is the only, nay the expected compliment you can pay to Sir Charles's safe return—which will at once dispel all fears of a discovery—but this melancholly and discontent must, of course, bring on an enquiry that must be fatal.

LADY FRANKFORD.

Thou base, mistaken man!—how often have you employ'd this self-same *sophistry* to lull my mind to peace?—now—you must plead in vain—

K 3

I find

134 THE FATAL ERROR.

I find the presence of my dear, injur'd husband more than I can bear——away, away, fly hence... and leave me to my fate !

CRANMORE.

Yet hear me, dearest Lady---loveliest of women !

LADY FRANKFORD.

Curse on your soothing arts that prevail'd on me not to raise the house, and proclaim my first injury when committed !——had I then call'd aloud for justice, I had been clear of guilt, which now must weigh me down with infamy.

LORD BELLGROVE *rushes out with his sword drawn.*

LORD BELLGROVE.

Draw, villain ! and receive from my hand that justice which too late o'ertakes you ! thou monster of ingratitude !  
(*they fight.*)

LADY FRANKFORD.

My brother ! O heavens ! (*screams and runs out.*)

CRANMORE.

Justice, indeed, has overtaken me. (*falls.*)

*Enter*

THE FATAL ERROR. 135

*Enter* SIR CHARLES *hastily, follow'd by*  
HUMPHRY.

SIR CHARLES.

Base Bellgrove ! what have you done by this rash action ? Did not you promise me to submit the affair of Emeline to my conduct ?

LORD BELLGROVE.

Unhappy, mistaken man ! would to Heaven it was the affair of Emeline—O, no ! it is a cause that must involve you in eternal misery !

SIR CHARLES, (*trembling.*)

O tell me ! while I have sense to hear.

LORD BELLGROVE.

If that villain on the floor is not speechless, he may want forgiveness from his injur'd friend.

CRANMORE.

(*raising himself on his arm.*)

I am dying, and without hope of mercy ! Oh, Lady Frankford ! I have ruined the best of women---and wrong'd the best of friends !

(*Sir Charles falls on the ground, Lord Bellgrove and Humphry raise and carry him to the couch.*)

That sight wounds me more than Bellgrove's sword;  
the grave alone can hide my shame. (*Dies.*)

K 4

LORD

136 THE FATAL ERROR.

LORD BELLGROVE.

My dearest brother.

HUMPHRY.

My worthy master—see—he recovers!

SIR CHARLES.

*(looking wildly round him.)*

Where am I? What means this blood and murder? Ha! my returning senses begin to torture me!—they plunge me in the miseries of hell! My dear Bellgrove, can it be? What, my wife! my dearest, much-lov'd wife! O, she was the best and worthiest woman! can she be false? where is she? tell me, Bellgrove?

LORD BELLGROVE.

Alas! I know not.

SIR CHARLES.

Go seek her, friend, *(to Humphry.)* bring me news from her. *(Humphry goes out.)* This may be a lying slave, *(pointing to Cranmore.)* may he not, Bellgrove?

LORD BELLGROVE.

Alas! I know it is too true.

SIR CHARLES.

Then I am ruin'd!—A Lady nobly descended! her education virtuous! her reputation clear! I [thought her a Phoenix of perfections! and is she  
lost;



THE FATAL ERROR. 137

lost?—the blessing of my youth!—my only comfort!—why are you silent, brother?

LORD BELLGROVE.

I am too near allied to your misfortune—I cannot speak.

SIR CHARLES.

My wife! the mother to my pretty babes! must they be slander'd by an envious world? Must they forget the name of mother?

HUMPHRY *returns weeping.*

Well, friend, where's your mistress?

HUMPHRY.

My Lady's dying, Sir! she has swallow'd poison! she's in her bed-chamber and begs to see you—you must hasten thither or it will be too late.

SIR CHARLES.

My bed-chamber! once my terrestrial heaven!—Brother, I must digest my grief—I must collect myself for this sad interview—Arm me with patience, Heaven! keep this white and virgin hand from outrage, and with that prayer I enter.

LORD BELLGROVE, *(to Humphry.)*

Good Humphry, secure Julietta—I will attend Sir Charles.

*(Humphry goes out.)*

*(Lord Bellgrove leads out Sir Charles.)*

SCENE

138 THE FATAL ERROR.

SCENE, LADY FRANKFORD'S Bed-  
Chamber.

LADY FRANKFORD, *sitting*, EMELINE]  
*standing by her, weeping.*

LADY FRANKFORD.

My dearest most unhappy Emeline, how cruel is thy hard fortune! to have thy youth and innocence plung'd in such severe affliction! thy ill-fated brother has involv'd us all in misery! but as his life has paid the forfeit, may he find mercy from an offended being!

*Enter* SIR CHARLES, *led in by* LORD  
BELLGROVE.

LADY FRANKFORD.

*(seeing them, falls on her knees, supported by Emeline.)*

O by what word—what title—or what name shall I implore your pardon? *(weeps.)*

SIR CHARLES.

Spare thy tears, I will weep for thee! and keep thy countenance, I will blush for thee! — Rise, I pray you, rise. *(Lady Frankford is reseated.)* Let me debate with thee—Were you not supplied with every

THE FATAL ERROR. 139

every wish, every pleasure, to the extent of my fortune?

LADY FRANKFORD.

I was.

SIR CHARLES.

Did I not lodge thee in my bosom? wear thee in my heart?

LADY FRANKFORD.

You did.

SIR CHARLES.

I did, indeed; witness these tears, I did. (*weeps.*)

LADY FRANKFORD.

I feel the friendly pangs of death upon me! but this tenderness distracts and tortures me worse than ten thousand deaths!—Hear me while I have strength to speak—Hear, and pity me—Soon after your fatal absence, the wretched Cranmore openly declar'd his passion to me—which I not only repulsed with a proper indignation, but set his crime of base ingratitude in so strong a light, and brought him to such a seeming state of penitence, that he firmly promis'd, on my forgiveness, to offend no more—I pardon'd him, and he remain'd some days a seeming penitent; but, good Heavens! that interval was vilely employ'd in seducing my maid to be his wicked agent—who,  
in

140 THE FATAL ERROR.

in the dead of night, gave him admittance to my bed! Thus I die free from all premeditated guilt--- My only crime, I do confess it, was my shameful weakness in being prevail'd on to conceal my injury! That was my *Fatal Error*! since it was impossible for me to bring pollution to your lov'd arms!—Thus I am lost—but, Oh! permit me to transfer that love, which I have forfeited, to our dear little ones!--good, injur'd man, and father to my children! pardon me.—O pardon me! If you forgive me not, how can I hope forgiveness in the world to come?

SIR CHARLES.

Even as I hope for pardon at that great day, when the just judge of Heaven enthroned sits, so be thou pardon'd!--Though thy black offence divorce our bodies, thy repentant tears unite our souls!—See! see! she faints! she dies! My wife! the mother to my pretty infants! both those lost names I do restore thee back, and with this kiss I wed thee once again.

LADY FRANKFORD.

This goodness comforts me—I'm blest to die in these lov'd arms—once more embracing my dear husband: (dies.

(*Sir Charles and Emeline weeping over her.*

LORD

THE FATAL ERROR. 141

LORD BELLGROVE.

I came to rail—but my rage is turn'd to pity,  
and melted into tears.

Behold the sad effects of guilty love !  
To guard us from th' assaults of powerful vice,  
Indulging Heaven unperring Reason gave !  
But when wild Passions gain their dreadful sway, }  
Unthinking Man becomes the willing Prey ! }  
The glorious Light is lost that shou'd direct his  
way !

F I N I S.



IN THE

STATE OF

NEW YORK

IN SENATE

JANUARY 1871

REPORT

OF THE

COMMISSIONERS

OF THE LAND OFFICE

IN RESPONSE TO A

RESOLUTION PASSED

BY THE SENATE

APRIL 1870

AND BY THE

ASSEMBLY

MARCH 1871

ALBANY:

WILLIAM H. SAWYER,

PRINTED BY

THE STATE PRINTING OFFICE,

1871.

1871.

1871.

1871.

1871.

T H E  
FORTUNATE PEASANT:

O R,  
NATURE will PREVAIL.

A  
C O M E D Y.

Taken from the PAYSAN PARVENU of M. de  
MARIVAUX.

THE

OF THE PRESENT

O. R.

NATURE WILL PREVAIL

O. M. D. Y.

THE PRESENT STATE OF THE  
NATIVE

## ADVERTISEMENT.

WHEN the *Paysan Parvenu* appeared written by that admirable author *M. de Marivaux*, several of my friends agreed with me there were many pleasant situations and strong characters of true humor, which, if well collected, with some few alterations, would not fail to make an acceptable Comedy.

After very little consideration on the affair, I determin'd to set about it, at my retirement in the country, the following summer—but reviewing it carefully the summer after, with that diffidence which has ever attended my few attempts as an author—I began to fear a design to raise a person of the low condition in which the Fortunate Peasant at first appears to the character of an husband for a Lady, would be an insuperable objection; as also, that *spirit* and *action* were wanting to make it acceptable to the stage. And, indeed, some few winters ago we had an instance of a new Comedy so circumstanc'd, call'd the *Sisters*, perform'd at Covent-Garden Theatre, taken from a Novel, call'd *Henrietta*, which met with merited success from the public in that form—but as a *Comedy* it fail'd and was acted but one night; though the same agreeable Authors attempted the transformation.

## Dramatis Personæ.

### M E N.

DOUCIN, a Priest; an Inmate and Director of  
the Family of the *Habberd's*.

JACOB, the Peasant.

L'BLANC, a pretended Fop.

PRESIDENT of Paris,

HIS GENTLEMAN.

### W O M E N.

Mrs. HABBERD, senior.

Mrs. HABBERD, junior.

Mrs. FERVAL.

} Devotees.

Mrs. LALAIN, a Widow, who lets Lodgings.

GENEVIVE, Waiting Maid to the elder Mrs.  
*Habberd*.

SERVANT.



---

T H E  
FORTUNATE PEASANT:  
O R  
NATURE WILL PREVAIL.

---

A C T I. S C E N E I.

JACOB, GENEVIVE.

GENEVIVE.

NAY, Mr. Jacob, you must leave off this country modesty; a bashful serving-man would be a prodigy in Paris! for you are likely to live with us—I make no doubt but our ladies will keep you—at least, I hope so.

JACOB.

I thank you, good Mrs. Genevive.

GENEVIVE.

GENEVIVE.

A handsome young fellow this. (*aside*)—I hear new cloaths are making for you—and, in the mean time, if it is in my power to be of any service to you, be assur'd you shall find me your friend.

JACOB.

I humbly thank you Mrs. Genevive—I am happy in having your good will. Pray, how long have you liv'd here?

GENEVIVE.

About six months—a long time I assure you to stay in a great family as times go—for the gentry now-a-days change their servants almost as often as they do their linen ; besides you will have two mistresses and a master here, and indeed 'tis no easy matter to humour them all.

JACOB.

Why truly as you say, I fear it is a hard task to please two women at once—but, pray, who is the master you speak of ?—for I understood that both the ladies are unmarried,

GENEVIVE.

[ They are so, Mr. Jacob—and both very godly, and true friends to the church—therefore, as their parents are dead, they have taken into the house a ghostly father, or director, a very holy man to be sure!

sure! to keep them in the true faith, and to give them spiritual comfort, and assistance—now, if you can but get his good will, you may depend on having the favour of the ladies—for they like or dislike just as he instructs them.

JACOB.

I suppose then, Mrs. Genevive, by your staying here so long, you have hit on the way to please him:—I am but a poor country lad, and have never been in service before, therefore if you will let me know what method you took to oblige him, I will endeavour to follow it.

GENEVIVE.

That's impossible. (*aside*) Why really the man is a very good sort of a man—but like all your churchman, a little proud and positive—you must take care never to contradict him:—my mistress (the eldest) is so devoted to his opinion, that o'my conscience, she neither thinks, nor speaks, but as he directs her—Ah, she is a pious lady!—and if she was not a little ill-natur'd, and given to backbite her neighbours, she would be the best woman in the world.

JACOB.

The lady who brought me here seemed to be of a sweet disposition.

L 3

GENEVIVE.

GENEVIVE.

She is so—but she is the youngest, and more given to the vanities of the world; for which they often reprove her.—She would often relieve the poor, but that, the director says, is an encouragement to idleness and sloth—Ah, he's a heavenly man!

JACOB.

And pray does he never do an act of charity?

GENEVIVE.

O, yes, to them that are industrious—I may say so, for he has been a liberal friend to me, and lets me want for nothing that money can buy—I can recommend you to him, and I will do it, for you seem to deserve it.

JACOB.

Dear Mrs. Genevive I am much beholden to you—I wish I could recommend myself to you, and that you wou'd accept of me for your servant.

GENEVIVE.

O dear Mr. Jacob, you are not so dull as I imagin'd, and have learn'd the town mode already.

JACOB.

I must be dull indeed, not to desire to kiss so obliging and so handsome a gentlewoman.

*(Offers to kiss her, she puts him off with her hand, which he kisses.)*

GENEVIVE.

GENEVIVE.

Nay—now—you grow most agreeably confident. I'll warrant you have taken this freedom with your betters before now—but here's somebody coming—you should have forc'd a kifs, Mr. Jacob.

*Enter* SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Mrs. Genevive, your lady wants you—and the taylor, this young man—He has brought home his new cloaths, and stays to try them on.

GENEVIVE.

Follow me, Mr. Jacob, I'll conduct you to him. *(Exeunt.*

## S C E N E II.

*Enter* Mrs. H A B B E R D, *senior*, and  
Mrs. H A B B E R D, *junior*.

*Mrs.* H A B B E R D, *sen*.

Nay, sister, according to this doctrine the whole sex may sin with impunity, if it be made criminal even to censure their faults.

*Mrs.* H A B B E R D, *jun*.

Not so neither, sister; those who glory in their  
L 4 crimes



crimes, ought to be branded with infamy—but what I blame is that spirit of detraction which attacks all alike; which derogates from the praise due even to worthy deeds; which comments on the looks and words even of the most innocent in order to find some flaw in them:—how inhumanly did you pull poor Miss Simper to pieces yesterday, at your return from your devotion, only for taking a pinch of snuff out of a gentleman's box.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

And with very good reason, sister; the young flirt did nothing but ogle him, when she ought to have rais'd her eyes to heaven!—

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

O Sister, if your eyes and thoughts had been fix'd there, you wou'd not observ'd the faults of your neighbours!—For my part, I think it is better to stay at home than to go to chapel only to bring home scandal.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

Sister, I wonder at you—you are always excusing every body's faults—but apropos—now I am speaking of faults—I was quite shock'd at the immodest manner in which Lady Tippet was dress'd to day! how had she the face to come to chapel in such a figure? I must own she disturb'd my prayers—upon my word it was frightful!

*Enter*

NATURE *will* PREVAIL.

*Enter* GENEVIVE.

GENEVIVE.

Ladies, Mrs. Ferval is come to wait on you.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

O, the agreeable devotee that lives at the president's—conduct her in. *(Exit GENE.*

*Enter Mrs. FERVAL.*

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

Dear ladies, your servant—I am extreamly glad to find you both well.—I miss'd you, madam *(to the youngest)* from chapel this morning, and as I knew your singular piety, was in pain 'till I came to make enquiry after your health.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

O madam, a slight excuse will serve to keep my sister at home; she is of opinion that too much religion is a crime.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

I am oblig'd to you, madam, for your kindness:—my sister you see is pleas'd to answer for me:—However 'tis a crime I shall acquit her of.—I own I think ill-nature is no great sign of that complacency of mind, which is the constant result of a sincere genuine piety. Besides, one may be as devout in the closet as the chapel.

*Mrs. HAB-*

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

So then, I suppose, you are growing an enemy to publick worship.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Charitably judg'd again, sister—I must confess I think it better not to frequent it, than to carry with me either pride or hypocrisy, which I fear is sometimes the case with zealots.

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

Why, madam, when a fair face begins to fade, nothing so effectually hides it as a veil of sanctity. Youth and beauty are sure of commanding respect, and devotion is the best method to avoid the contempt which naturally follows the loss of them.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Ha! ha! ha! is that the case, sister?

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

Ladies, you are pleas'd to be very witty, but I am not so much older than either of you, but I may still hope to be as acceptable to the men—nay, perhaps, am so.

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

I make no doubt on't—few devotees are without a friend to compensate, with private pleasure, the penance they undergo in publick; nor do I blame them provided they avoid scandal. As for  
my

my part, it was my misfortune to have a jealous husband, one who thought even cheerfulness a fault, therefore, at his death, I thought it prudent to retire from the world ; yet I don't condemn those who enjoy it. Let the young have their time---we have had ours.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

Madam, I don't understand you ; my conduct was always blameless, and never call'd in question, even in my youth.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Beware then, sister, of doing any thing now you are in years, to forfeit that respect gain'd in youth ; for you are so severe in your censures, that you will find no mercy from the world, should any frailty be discover'd in you.

*Mrs. FERAL.*

Ay, dear Madam, take care of a discovery—for that is the greatest fault any woman can be guilty of—(*Ferval and younger Habberd laugh*) ha, ha, ha, come Mrs. Habberd, don't look so serious—I only rally, and hope you will excuse my mirth.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

O freely, Madam, your raillery no way touches me, and therefore does not in the least discompose me.

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Dear Mrs. Ferval, will you stay and breakfast with us?

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

Madam, I must beg to be excused—I promised the President to be at home—(*looks at her watch*) bless me, 'tis near the hour—adieu, dear Ladies—nay, no ceremony. (*Exit Ferval.*)

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

Odious creature! and pray, sister, is this proper behaviour for us who are devotees to religion?

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Dear sister, let us wave this disagreeable discourse—I'll call for our new servant. (*rings.*)

*Enter GENEVIVE.*

GENEVIVE.

Did you call, Madam?

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Has the taylor brought home Jacob's new cloaths?

GENEVIVE.

Yes, Madam.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Is he dress'd?

GENE-



GENEVIVE.

I believe he is, Madam.

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

Well—send him in then. (*Exit Genevive.*

*Enter* JACOB, *new dress'd, who bows respectfully.*

Well, sister—how do you like him now?

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

Very well, indeed: he is a clean, well-made young man, and seems to have a very honest countenance. But, sister, I must go and see the good Doctor; Genevive tells me he is something better. In the mean time, you may inform the young man what employment he is to have in the family.

(*Exit.*

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

Well, Jacob—I now take you into my service; but to continue in it, will entirely depend on your own behaviour.

JACOB.

I hope, Madam, you will be so good to honour me with your instructions, to which I shall pay a perfect obedience,

*Mrs.*



138 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

You seem to have good sense, and if you are discreet, you may be happy—I shall treat you with the kindness of a friend rather than the authority of a mistress.—Come nearer, let me examine your dress—who cur'd your hair?—pray, Jacob, take particular care of it; it is very becoming. I wou'd have you be a credit to me—you assisted me the other morning in my distress, with so much tenderness, I lik'd you the first moment I saw you, and, in time, may give you better proofs of my esteem.

*JACOB.*

I know not, Madam, how to answer properly to such excessive goodness—but my service, my life, shall be for ever devoted to you.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

I make no doubt of your gratitude—your business here, I will take care, shall not be toilsome—be cautious not to offend the good Doctor—you are in a very sober family, and therefore must carry yourself with modesty and gravity—keep your thoughts to yourself, and believe me your friend.

*JACOB.*

It is my resolution, Madam, to be your grateful servant.

*Mrs.*

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.* returns with DOUCIN.

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.* (*rising.*)

Dear Sir—I rejoice at your sudden recovery—you have agreeably surprized me by this visit—pray sit here, Sir—walking from your apartment, I fear, has fatigu'd you.

(*All this while the Director is looking at Jacob.*)

DOUCIN.

Is this your servant, Ladies?

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

Yes, Sir, this is the lad we have just hired—and it is a service which he did my sister that occasioned it.

JACOB.

I don't like his looks.

(*Aside.*)

DOUCIN.

A service, say you?

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

Yes, Sir,—It was this (*here she waves her hand, and Jacob bows and retires*) my sister went out yesterday to make a morning visit to an early lady, who had promis'd to recommend us a good servant. It being a fine morning, she would walk thither, quite contrary to my advice, and alone—she did so—~~but~~ in her return, coming over the new bridge

160 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

bridge, she fainted—I tremble at the relation of it—In this dreadful condition she must have died, but for the kind assistance of that good young man, who lent her his help quite home—My sister pleas'd with his behaviour and his story, inclin'd me to entertain him as a servant. He never was in service before.

DOUCIN, *(after a pause.)*

You have been very hasty, Ladies. *(looking gravely at them.)* You have been very hasty.

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

Well, Sir, and what harm can there be in that, if he is an honest lad, as I believe he is?—Here he wants a place—I meet with him in the street—he does me a particular service in helping me home—we want a servant, and therefore we hire him—this is surely an act of charity to him, and a service to ourselves.

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

Well, sister, we both thought so, but what signifies that? if our worthy friend don't approve what we have done, we ought to submit; and, to tell you the truth, when you first spoke to me about keeping this young fellow, I thought I felt something of an uneasiness.

DOUCIN.

My dear Lady, hear me—You know with what  
what

what a particular affection I have always given my advice to—to both of you.

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

So—my sister has at least three parts and a half to her share of that compliment. (*aside.*)—We know very well, Sir, that you have an equal value for both of us. (*smiling.*) Your piety admits no preference.

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

O, sister, I took it in no other sense myself, not I—Though our worthy friend should be more attach'd to you than to me, I should be far from finding fault—you are undoubtedly more deserving his care than I am.

DOUCIN.

What has my blunder involv'd me in. (*aside.*) My dear sisters, do not disturb yourselves—you are both equal to me—because you both love our holy religion equally—but this is foreign to the subject of our discourse—we were talking of the young man you have hir'd, which, at present, you see no harm in—I am persuaded you do not—but pray vouchsafe to hear me: In the first place, you have acted against human prudence—you have no knowledge of him, any farther than an accidental meeting in the street—you think he has an honest countenance—every body sees with their own eyes

in that respect, though, I must own, mine are not altogether so favourable to him; however, I will pass that article—but who wou'd trust their lives and fortunes with a stranger, upon the mere credit of his countenance? Here you are only a few women in a house—who has been answerable for his morals, his religion, and his character? May not a rascal have the look of an honest man?

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Charity commands me to think to his advantage, Sir.

*DOUCIN, (angrily.)*

But Charity does not command you to be imprudent, and it is an imprudence to venture as you do.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

Ah, sister! how sensible is what our worthy friend advances!—Tho' the lad has something at first sight very promising; yet, now I think on't, he has a sort of a—I don't know what, that made me hesitate—Indeed he has.

*DOUCIN.*

Very well—You approve of what I have already said, but that is nothing in comparison of what I have to say—This lad is in the prime of youth!

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Ay, that's his crime. *(aside.)*

*DOUCIN.*



## DOUCIN.

His looks are bold and unsettled—and you are not yet arrived at an age to live free from scandal. Don't you know how prone the world is to scandal? Besides, my dear sisters, (for it is my duty to suppress nothing) are we not all of us full of frailties?

*(The Elder Habberd sighs, and the Youngest smiles.)*

Is it not the whole business of our lives to war against ourselves—to fall, and to rise—that consideration ought to make us tremble—This lad is too young—do not let us seek new difficulties—here you will see him every moment—the root of sin is continually in us, and I already distrust, for I am obliged to discharge my conscience; I say I already distrust this obstinate liking you have taken to him—it is innocent, I know it is, but will it always be so? I say once more I distrust it.

*(Looking at the Youngest Habberd, who shews signs of disorder.)*

I see that Lady is not at all satisfied with my observations on this affair—but whence proceeds this fondness to her own opinion? I can't approve this disposition of mind—it is suspicious, and one may venture to say, it is a snare the wicked one has spread for her, and, therefore, I am oblig'd to exhort you to part with this young man.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

As for my part, Sir, I answer for myself, that you are master, and you shall see my obedience—for from this very instant I protest against receiving any further service from the young man in question; and I do not doubt but my sister will follow my example.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Truly, sister, I don't know how I ought to take what I hear—you seem charm'd with the imaginary affront, and don't doubt but I will conform to your example!—why I have done nothing but conform since we have liv'd together—one must always conform to your humour or there is no peace—and there is more occasion for our friend here to alarm himself for you, than at what I have done in entertaining a poor lad, to whom I am perhaps oblig'd for my life—I must turn him away for his recompence, though we have both engag'd our words to keep him—The doctor objects that he has nobody to give him a character, but the young man has given us the name of a very creditable person for that purpose; therefore that objection falls to the ground—and, as to myself, he has done me such a considerable service, that, after I am fully satisfied of the truth of his character, I cannot bid him go, indeed I will not.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

Well, sister, if that's all, I'll undertake to dis-  
miss

miss him for you, if you'll give me leave; and promise to repair my past imperiousness by an entire condescension to your advice, for the future—for since you have more wit, and more penetration than any body else, it's impossible you shou'd be mistaken; but my happiness is, that these foibles in me have escap'd the notice of our worthy friend here, your superior, Madam!

DOUCIN.

I came not here, Ladies, to sow division between you; and therefore must not admit of it.—Fye! fye!—this too earnest dispute has disorder'd me again—I feel the returning fever—Come, Madam, you must see me to my chamber; after that, I will receive no visit 'till I am perfectly recover'd. (*looking at the Youngest Habberd*) When you are dispos'd to pay a proper regard to my advice, Madam, perhaps you may obtain it.

(*Exit with Mrs. Habberd, sen.*)

Mrs. HABBERD, jun. (*alone.*)

There is nothing people are so free of as their advice—I cou'd be even with 'em, and advise them to guard against the bad consequences that may attend their *Platonic* pleasures—Nature may be mortified, and that way master'd; but when indulg'd, then reason must give way, and virtue's self must own a conqueror! this is too true—therefore these Platonic freedoms! these refin'd friendships! are delusive and dangerous! (*pauses.*) I  
feel

166 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

feel the force of *powerful* NATURE at my heart, which greatly alarms me !---let me summon up my guards.---Reason ! Interest ! Pride !---ay, alas ! several remedies are good to cure Love, but there is not one of them infallible. *(Exit.*

*Enter* JACOB, *melancholly.*

JACOB.

I don't like the looks of that confounded Dominee ; I can never forget with what an eye he survey'd me : and must all the charming things I have had, and the more charming things I have promis'd myself, prove but a dream ? the delicious Genevive ! and O, my more delicious mistress ! must I lose all these ?---unhappy Jacob !

*Enter* GENEVIVE.

GENEVIVE.

There he is——I must engage him ; for besides his being a pretty fellow, a husband, in my situation, is mighty necessary. *(Aside.)* What melancholly, in the midst of your good fortune, Mr. Jacob ?

JACOB.

Have not I reason, Mrs. Genevive ? Is not the danger

danger I am in, of loosing so agreeable a friend as you, enough to make me melancholly.

GENEVIVE.

Where's the danger ?

JACOB.

From the fountain of all mischief, a priest ! and a woman ! the Director told me, the first look, he did not like me, which made me fly out of the room ; but my curiosity laid my ear to the key-hole, and I have not had strength enough to crawl ever since—for, said the Dominee, he has a handsome ill-looking face, and must not live here ; which the eldest Lady confirm'd ; and so they have broke the heart of your poor Jacob.

GENEVIVE.

And you have reason to be assur'd the Director does not like you ?

JACOB.

Ay, Mrs. Genevive, too much reason.

GENEVIVE.

I am glad of it with all my heart.

JACOB.

What do you make a jest of my misfortune then ?

GENE-



GENEVIVE.

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha, ha,—why I laugh at it, Jacob.

JACOB.

I see you do.

GENEVIVE.

And you shall laugh with me, Jacob.

JACOB.

Not till I know the jest, Mrs. Genevive.

GENEVIVE.

Why, the jest lies in my comical method of transforming this terrible enemy of your's into your best friend—I know a way of softening the Director, and making him like you, almost as well as I do, before night.

JACOB.

Indeed! but the method, Mrs. Genevive?

GENEVIVE.

Why, I'll tell him, *I* like you, and you *shall* live here—that's enough.

JACOB.

Indeed!—but then by this influence of your's, I presume, Mrs. Genevive, *he* likes *you* well enough.

GENE-

GENEVIVE.

Well enough! why he's passionately in love with me, Jacob! why, if I had a mind, I could make my fortune!

JACOB.

But I am afraid it is in bad money, this fortune of your's, Mrs. Genevive! don't meddle with such merchandize; but e'en keep your own; remember when a maid is once sold, I would not give the buyer a farthing for his bargain.

GENEVIVE.

His sense of honor confounds me—I've gone a little too far. (*aside.*) Nay, I must needs say, Mr. Jacob, his offers, and presents to me, are all made in such an honourable manner, that I can't tell how to be affronted at it; as to myself, I can depend upon my own discretion; but, with submission to your better judgement, Mr. Jacob, I really think it might not be amiss, if I was to take the advantage of his liberal humour towards me; he knows well enough that his love signifies nothing; for I told him plainly that he shan't have his ends—now, here's a rich man has taken a friendship for me; for friendship or love, you know, is all the same thing, considering how I return it, therefore, shou'd I refuse his presents? speak, Mr. Jacob.

JACOB.

JACOB.

Me!—why—if things are as you say, Mrs. Genevive, why then it's wonderous well—since his love is nothing but friendship—but, for my part, I never had any notion of this sort of friendship, not I, Mrs. Genevive:—I thought he lov'd you as men commonly love a pretty wench—but since he's so modest, and you so discreet, why you may c'en venture boldly—only take care you don't stumble when he stumbles—for men are waggish, and apt to be uppermost,

GENEVIVE.

Oh, let me alone—I warrant you I know how to manage him.

JACOB. (*Aside.*)

You have not that lesson to learn, I dare say.

GENEVIVE.

I am transported that we jump so in our opinions of this affair—and to shew you with what sincerity I am your friend, Mr. Jacob, I will conceal nothing from you—look here (*pulls out a purse*) the Director gave me this purse yesterday—he wou'd make me take something before I left him, to remember him by.

JACOB.

Meaning the purse, I suppose.

GENE-

GENEVIVE.

Pray accept what I offer you, says he——there shall be no obligation on your side.

JACOB.

What, all Loui'dors ! O most friendly, charitable churchman!

GENEVIVE. (*taking some out.*)

There, Jacob, put those in your pocket——for what's a man without money in his pocket ? and since I have reveal'd to you this secret of coining Loui'dores, be assured, my friend shall never want them——

(*A bell rings.*)

Hark ! my Lady wants me ! be happy, Jacob, and doubt not my power of serving you with the Director.

(*Exit.*)

JACOB.

No, no, I don't doubt your power——these were all coined in the devil's mint !—O my most delicate most pious Dominee ! why, here's a sweet piece of revenge for the fright he just now put me in. Here's a fine discovery ! O my most sanctified——my rampant priest ! who knows but this dominerin' churchman has brought the whole family under him ? and yet, I hope, my sweet mistress has escap'd him, because I found she dare take the liberty of opposing his opinion. These priests are as bad as the devil himself, tho' they take different sides ;  
yet

172. *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

yet to do them both right, I wish they don't quarrel only like lawyers for their fees, and meet good friends in private to laugh at their clients. Surely this affair of Genevive's may be improved into an advantage over him—at least, it will secure me in my place; and then, all things consider'd, I have a fair prospect before me.

*Fortune alone, from such a fruitful plan,  
May, of the Peasant, make a Gentleman.*

*(Exit.*

*End of the FIRST ACT.*



## A C T II. S C E N E I.

DOUCIN, *alone, in his study.*

DOUCIN.

WHAT a happy fellow is a successful hypocrite? one who, like me, enjoys the luxury of the sinner, and yet preserves the seeming purity of the saint!—hypocrisy is a sort of homage, which vice pays to virtue. If there be such men, as were never thought to do any thing ridiculous, it is only because they have not been nicely look'd into.—This counterfeited indisposition secures me leisure to toy away the hours with that delicious tempting girl, Genevive! who, by this confinement to my chamber, is sent on frequent messages from her mistress, whose fondness is disgustful now.—Sure nothing is so unwelcome a sight as a stale mistress, after we have just been successful with a new one—O, here she comes.

*Enter*

*Enter GENEVIVE.*

GENEVIVE.

My Lady has sent me, with her duty, to enquire after your health, Sir—Is your fever abated, Sir?

DOUCIN.

It increases, child, at the sight of you: love, child, cannot be compared to any thing more properly than to a fever; for in both cases, both the degree, and the continuance of the disease, is out of a man's own power.

GENEVIVE.

If one was to judge of love, Sir, according to the greatest part of the effects it produces, it might very justly pass for hatred, rather than kindness.

DOUCIN:

Why so melancholly a reflection, my charming Genevive? what bad effects are you apprehensive of?

GENEVIVE.

Nothing less, Sir, than a living witness of our love and shame!

DOUCIN.

DOUCIN.

What do I hear!--confusion! does the devil intend me that mischief? he must be disappointed. (*Aside.*) That witness, child, must either be stifled or bought off, and the price must be a husband---a necessary husband; our reputation, my dear child, claims our first care. Virtue! (I mean the appearance of it) is a dress that decency requires us to appear in.

GENEVIVE.

A husband, Sir, may be a necessary thing enough to buy; but how can a poor girl make the purchase?

DOUCIN.

Do but find the proper man, child, and the rest shall be my care.

GENEVIVE.

What think you of our new servant, the poor peasant, Jacob? good fortune, Sir, has not yet deserted us; for I have found him both amorous and mercenary. I had an opportunity this morning of seducing him with some of the gold you gave me; therefore, if you, Sir, will but supply me with a necessary quantity of money, I'll undertake to produce---the other part of the temptation.

DOUCIN.

DOUCIN.

About it instantly, my child---no money shall be wanting.

GENEVIVE.

I have encourag'd his addressees already, and this morning gave him an earnest of my good will---I shew'd him the gold you gave me; some of which he very eagerly accepted of---now, Sir, your influence with him would confirm the affair, for he dreads you as his greatest enemy.

DOUCIN.

Find him out, my girl, and prepare him, after which I'll send for him here---take this kiss---ay, and my purse too---fly, Genevive. (*Exit Genevive.*)  
What a delicate condition am I involved in?---to be in danger of being discover'd in a scandalous amour with a silly girl!--all our passions engage us in faults; but certainly those are the most ridiculous, that Love makes us commit. (*Exit.*)

## SCENE II.

*Enter* JACOB, *musing.*

JACOB.

These new cloaths, and the very tender discoveries my good mistress has made to me, will certainly

tainly make me think myself a person of very singular attractions---the very moment I perceiv'd that my mistress look'd kindly at me, my inclination for Genevive began to abate of its fervor---her heart seem'd no more a conquest of importance, and I no longer thought it an honour to be in her favour. Besides, I don't like the frequent visits she makes to this Dominee :—she owns he has declared himself her lover—and shewed me a purse of gold—which is certainly the most dangerous shape the devil can take, to tempt a young girl with, who is a little upon the jilt, and a little mercenary into the bargain.—Here she comes.

*Enter GENEVIVE, with the purse in her hand.*

Ay, and smiling too—ha, what pretty thing has the bountiful Director been putting into thy hand, Mrs. Genevive? What more treasure?

GENEVIVE.

Can any thing be imagin'd more generous, than his giving me all those, and for no other reason but because he likes me?

JACOB.

O that's no wonder at all, dear Mrs. Genevive—a man's friendship (as you call it) for a pretty girl

VOL. II.

N

will



will run much greater lengths—he wont stop here, depend on't.

GENEVIVE.

Indeed, Mr. Jacob, you're mistaken if you think ill of the director; he's a good man, and gives me this money with good designs; you will acknowledge it when you know all—much more than this is at my service.

JACOB.

Take all, dear Mrs. Genevive, refuse nothing—If you can't make use of it, I can; I'll engage to find a way of laying it out.

GENEVIVE.

Say you so—well, Mr. Jacob, I assure you, if I do, I shall accept it purely upon your account.

JACOB.

Charming—dearest Genevive—and is this fine Purse for me? (*Offers to take it.*)

GENEVIVE.

As for this money, and what more I am to have, you wont think it amiss, Mr. Jacob, if I never part with it but in favour of a husband, when I get one (*puts up the purse*)—consider of that a little.

JACOB.

Troth, Mrs. Genevive, I can't tell where to get you.

you one at present:—I am acquainted with nobody that wants a wife.

GENEVIVE.

Hey day! what do you mean by giving me such an answer? what are thy wits gone a wool gathering? dost not understand me then? I dont ask thee to get me a husband, you may be yourself one if you will.—ben't you a branch of the same wood they are all made of?

JACOB.

Pray, Mrs. Genevive, no more of the wood, nor the branches neither, they are words of ill omen—if it stuck at nothing but my being your husband, I would become so this instant; nor should I be afraid of any thing, but dying for joy—can you make a doubt on't? no, no, that's not the difficulty.

GENEVIVE.

Well, and what is it then pray?

JACOB.

O, nothing but a little trifle—It's only the Director's friendship for you, which, perhaps, may oblige me with the bastinado, if I am to great with his friend.

GENEVIVE.

Why what maggot has bit you by the brain now? so far from it, I'll hold a wager, he will

N 2

give

180 *The* FORTUNATE PEASANT : Or,

give his consent that I should marry you, and a fortune into the bargain.

JACOB.

Ay, dear Mrs. Genevive—It's very suspicious, that his honourable affection is nothing but grimace—I'm desperately afraid that he's no better than a fox in lamb's cloathing, who watches his opportunity to snap up the leveret, and when he sees such a little animal as me nose after her, I leave you to judge, whether he won't baulk the scent; and not suffer me so much as to touch a hair.

GENEVIVE.

Your suspicions are false, Mr. Jacob, he will prove a friend to both of us—but I hear somebody coming—adieu! the next time we meet I'll cure you of all your suspicions. *(Exit.*

JACOB.

Cure me—yes, yes, you have cur'd me—I don't like this business—I wish it may end here.

*Enter a Servant.*

SERVANT.

Mr. Jacob, the Director wants to speak with you in his apartment. *(Exit.*

JACOB.

I was thinking so; this is what I was afraid of; I cou'd manage this affair very well with Genevive, but

but what shall I do now? I dread the peircing eyes of that penetrating Director. My attractions will not avail me at this visit; it will frighten me into the poor peasant again—but I'll collect my resolution—courage, Jacob! (Exit.

## S C E N E III.

DOUCIN *sitting alone in his Apartment.*

DOUCIN.

What man has strength enough to follow his reason as far as it would lead him?—We none of us know the utmost that our passions have the power to make us do—It is but seldom that reason can assist us—one passion is commonly cur'd by another, and there is none so extravagant but hath the pretence ready to keep it in countenance.

*Enter JACOB bowing, at a distance.*

Well, Jacob, I understand that thy mistress has taken thee under her protection, and I am glad of it; but that is not all; I hear news of you; why here you have been amongst us but a few days, and you have made a conquest already:—why Genevive perfectly doats on thee—I suppose, there's no love lost between you.

N 3

JACOB.

182 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

JACOB.

Alas, 'Sir! what can the poor girl have done to deserve my hatred?

DOUCIN.

Oh, Jacob, speak boldly—you may open your mind to me—It is happy for thee that thou art a favourite with Genevive, and I approve her choice. Thou art young, and, I am told, prudent and active—As for her part, Genevive is a very agreeable girl. I have a particular value for her parents, and recommended her to this family, for no other reason than to have her—near me—when any thing should offer for her service.—Her prepossession for thee a little disconcerts my measures, for thou art poor, and I intended to have match'd her more to her advantage—but, in short, she loves thee and will hear of nobody else:—why, let it be so—I think, my good offices may amply supply thy deficiency, and stand thee instead of a patrimony. I have already given her a sum of money, and will instruct thee how to lay it out;—but I'll do more, I'll furnish you a little house, and pay the rent myself—I'll ease you of that burthen, 'till it better suits your convenience to bear it; for I dare promise to procure you some profitable post; therefore live well with the wife I give thee; she's of a very tractable disposition, and very modest,

JACOB.



JACOB.

Yes, Sir, she's very tractable.

DOUCIN.

But, Jacob, before speak nothing of this—I'd have you take leave of the family without much ceremony—you may say you are offer'd a place of more advantage, and one that suits you better—Genevive shall pretend the necessity of a journey to see her mother, who is very ancient.—As soon as you are out of the house you may get married directly; farewell—dont stay to thank me; I'm a little busy at present; go and acquaint Genevive with what I have said to you—and—d'ye hear, Jacob (*smiling*) take that little purse of money, that lies on the table—it will serve to bear your expences at the wedding.

JACOB. (*pausing.*)

What a labyrinth am I in! what flattering temptation—a house compleatly furnish'd—a deal of ready money—a profitable post—and a pretty wife; ay, alas! that's the worst part of the settlement—Genevive will loose all her charms when once we are married—the remembrance of her fault will make her insupportable—my infamy will spread every where, my house will be a purgatory—every thing will go to rack, and depend upon it her gallant will revenge her quarrel—she will always have it in her power to ruin me; I shan't be the first

184 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

that has been serv'd so—ay, think well on that—  
and yet, that purse seems exceedingly well lin'd—  
what pity it is to loose it! *(aside)*

DOUCIN.

What have you never a word say, Jacob?—what  
are you thinking on?

JACOB.

Why truly, Sir, I was thinking, and thinking a  
great deal—you shall know what, if you please—but  
you will be so good to excuse my frankness,  
Sir.

DOUCIN.

Speak thy mind freely---I don't like this. *(aside.)*

JACOB.

Why now, Sir, suppose *I* was you, and *you* me,  
do poor men love to be cuckolds? Yet, perhaps,  
you would be one if I should marry you to Gene-  
vive.—That's all, Sir; this is the subject I was ru-  
minating.

DOUCIN.

How's this! why is not Genevive a modest girl?

JACOB.

O, yes, Sir, very modest—as to what concerns  
the carrying a How d'ye, or dropping a courtsey—  
but as to making a man a good wife, I must ac-  
knowledge I have no great notion of the modesty  
she has for that purpose,

DOUCIN.

DOUCIN.

And pray, Sir, what have you to reproach her with? (*speaking gravely.*)

JACOB.

Ha, ha, Sir—you know best, the short and the long of that affair—you was by and I was not.—But I hope there is no offence in guessing, Sir.

DOUCIN.

You are pleas'd to be witty, Mr. Jacob, therefore pray afford me your attention, in my turn.—All you imagine about Genevive, is entirely false; but, supposing it true, I know several gentlemen in Paris, who are now persons of consideration, very rich, with great attendance, who owe the rise of their grandeur to nothing but their marrying with your Genevive's. Now, do you conceit yourself a better man than any of them? or is it the fear of being laugh'd at, that frights you? and who must laugh at you? who knows you? are you a creature of any consequence in life? pray, who will trouble their heads about your honour? or will any body so much as imagine there is any belonging to such a wretch as you?—Go, go, my lad, the honour of such as you, is to have wherewithal to subsist, and wherewith to raise yourselves out of your original obscurity—do you understand me?—the meanest of men in this world, are they who have nothing.

JACOB

JACOB.

No matter for that, Sir; I had rather be the meanest of men, than the most unhappy.

DOUCIN, (*frowning.*)

Your resolution is taken then?

JACOB.

Troth, Sir, I am very sorry for it—but what wou'd you have me do? In our village we have a custom of marrying none but maids; and if there happens to be any girl who has been chambermaid to a gentleman, why she must e'en content herself with a gallant; for as for the chance of a husband, there's no such thing—it's a rule amongst us, and especially in our family; my mother was married a maid, her mother the same, and so from grandmothers to great grandmothers—I came into the world, Sir, directly as I tell you, and am oblig'd to make no alteration in that particular.

DOUCIN, (*angrily.*)

You are a rascal!—Here you have openly pretended love to Genevive—at first you was ambitious of nothing but the happiness of marrying her, as she and others can testify—but now you have the impudence to accuse her, of not being a girl of honour: It seems you have got that impertinent notion in your head, and consequently I do not question, but your tongue runs accordingly, when you talk of her; and, it seems, its nothing  
but

but my pure good will to her that occasions all this injustice—Indeed, Master Jacob, I shall take another course; and since I have troubled myself so far, and you have had money of her, upon the footing of a person, who was to be her husband, I shan't allow you to make a fool of her—I won't leave you at liberty to hurt her—therefore if you do not marry her, your next business shall be with me—I give you twenty-four hours to determine it—choose either her hand, or a jail—that, villain! is all at present I have to say to you.

*(Exit.)*

JACOB, *(alone.)*

*(he stands stupified.)*

What will become of me? Unhappy Jacob! I am afraid I was to blame for taking any of Genevive's money---it certainly made me a kind of accomplice, in that breach of virtue, which procur'd it.

*Enter* GENEVIVE.

GENEVIVE.

So, Mr. Jacob; I was told the Director had sent for you, and have been impatient ever since to know the business—What has he said to you?

JACOB.

Softly, Mrs. Genevive; I have four-and-twenty hours



188 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

hours before me to make you an answer in, and I  
shan't say a word 'till the last minute. (*going.*)

GENEVIVE.

What mean you? for heaven's sake speak to  
me! pray speak to me, Jacob!

JACOB.

Four-and-twenty hours hence, Mrs. Genivive.  
(*running off.*)

GENEVIVE.

I am confounded, and amaz'd! what can all  
this mean?---the Director must inform me. (*Exit.*)

SCENE IV. *Mrs. HABBERD's Apartment.*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun. alone.*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

I never yet met with any author, who gave a just  
definition of love—Women often *fancy* themselves  
in love, when, in reality, it is no such matter—  
The diversion of an amour—the little commotions  
that an intrigue raises in their breasts; the natural  
inclination to be courted, and the pleasure of deny-  
ing, makes them think that what they feel is pas-  
sion, when in truth it is nothing but a coquette-  
humour. (*pausing.*) But the emotions I feel for  
this

this charming innocent youth, is *nature without disguise*! The world will say, my *pride* shou'd defend me from entertaining so low a passion—thus the real pleasures of life are sacrific'd to false appearances.

*Enter JACOB crying.*

JACOB.

Oh, Madam! your poor servant is ruin'd for ever.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

And what is the matter, my poor Jacob?—Why are thy eyes bath'd in tears?

JACOB.

*(throwing himself at her feet.*

Oh, my good mistress! your poor servant must be haul'd away to prison, within these four-and-twenty hours.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

To prison! Hast thou committed any base crime?

JACOB.

Quite the contrary, Madam: it is because I won't commit a base crime.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Pri'thee explain thyself.

JACOB.

*JACOB.*  
 You order'd me to be a credit to you, Madam; you know you did—but how is it possible? How can I get any credit for you, when they won't so much as let me keep the little I have for myself? The Director says, he won't suffer me to give myself the air of having any—What a deplorable place is this, Madam! Here a man must be sent to jail, for standing upon his credit, but he that has none to stand on, must be entertain'd in the best parlour—Marry a gentleman's chambermaid, and you shall have purses of money, and fine cloaths; but be honest, and they'll clap you on a stone doubler.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

You amaze me, Jacob! I don't yet understand you.

*JACOB.*

These are the Director's sentiments, Madam! who, begging your pardon, wou'd have me marry his chambermaid.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Rise, Jacob—What is this thou art raving about, a chambermaid!—Has the Director one?

*JACOB,*

Yes, he has, Madam; Mrs. Genevive!—Who, it seems, was your sister's—It is Mrs. Genevive, I mean, who haunts me like a ghost—and whom  
 the

the Director commands me to marry. Pity me, Madam, and lend me your protection—this jail he threatens me with almost distracts me (*altering his tone, and speaking softly.*) I fancy, it wou'd be most advisable to run away, madam.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

No, no, Jacob, doubt not my protection—this account fills me with amazement!—Give me but some proof of this, and I will not only protect thee, but give thee ample satisfaction, for this intended baseness—O, I see Genevive sauntering this way (*speaking softly.*) perhaps if I retire she will speak to you—entice her this way, and keep within my hearing.

*(Mrs. Habberd retires.)*

JACOB. (*speaking loudly*)

I shall obey your commands, madam.

*(bums a tune.)*

*Enter GENEVIVE.*

GENEVIVE.

Are you there, ungrateful traitor!—thou villain! (*taking hold of his sleeve*) who, not content with refusing my hand, loadest me with shame and disgrace:—the Director has told me all; speak, what reason have you to say, that I am not a girl of honour?

JACOB.

JACOB.

For heaven's sake, Mrs. Genevive, give me time to consider—It's neither your being, or not being a girl of honour, that I hesitate at;—it's only your purses of gold, and other fine gew-gaws, which I really believe would be as much for your honour to be without. As your honour was, before this discovery, I lik'd it well enough; but what signifies your talking at this rate? why should you and I quarrel—indeed I was a little to blame in my behaviour to the Director.—But why cou'd not you as well have told me the truth, there's nothing so engaging as sincerity—and yet you are a dissembler, but then you are a pretty dissembler.—I know the whole affair between you; and therefore cou'd not bear the sound of the proposal from the Director; it wou'd have been less frightful from a pretty mouth: Now, had you acknowledg'd your little trip, I shou'd not have matter'd it so much—at least a woman's oblig'd to a man for taking things so civilly; but to force the bit into my mouth!—in short, it was not using me fair—you ought to have made a generous confession—indeed, Mrs. Genevive, you ought.

GENEVIVE.

Well—Jacob—why then I will confess (cries.

JACOB.

Come on then—nay, no tears.

GENE-



GENEVIVE.

Will you forgive me, Jacob?

JACOB.

Those eyes, my little Genevive, were not only made to implore forgiveness, but to obtain it too.

GENEVIVE

Why then—the Director pursu'd, and I ran from him.

JACOB.

To be sure.

GENEVIVE.

But, at last, he threw purses of gold at my head, which gave me such a dizziness—that—I fell down—and—so—but—I pick'd up the purses—won't you go my halves, Jacob?

JACOB.

Alas! alas! Mrs. Genevive, this is a very unlucky affair—for, unless my eyes very much deceive me, you seem to thrive, by the pious endeavours of this churchman! very shortly, I presume, you will be able to present him with an heir to his piety.

GENEVIVE.

Why, indeed, to deal sincerely with you, Jacob, (cries.) I have some such fears—but, indeed, Jacob,

VOL. II.

O

for

for the future, you may depend upon the prudence of my conduct.

JACOB.

But the misfortune is, this prudence comes too late—'tis like a physician to a dead patient.

GENEVIVE.

What, must I lose you then?

JACOB.

As to that—I'll consider on't—but I must have a little time to settle my heart. Hark, I hear somebody coming—odso, 'tis my Lady—fly, my little Genevive. *(Exit Genevive.)*

*Re-enter Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Very well, Jacob—I am convinced of their baseness, and your virtuous disposition—what a complicated scene of villainy is here?—but I will reward thee—amply reward thee, for this thy prudent management.

*Enter Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

*(Jacob bows respectfully, and retires to the back of the scene.)*

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

I thought you was alone, sister; surely you de-

mean yourself, by your extraordinary indulgencies to that fellow.

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

I fear Pride hath a greater share than Goodness in the reproofs we generally give other people for their faults, my blameless sister.

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

My faults, sister, are too small to be secrets---I can freely confess them.

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

When we confess *small faults*, sister, it is done with a design to make people believe we have no *great ones*.

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

Pray, dearest sister, what great faults of mine have fallen within your nice discernment?

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

I'll tell you, sister.---Attend without (*to Jacob, who bows, and goes out*). You see I have some discretion, even in the midst of my resentment, and would hide *your blush*, tho' you have wilfully exposed mine.---Your reverend friend, the Director, to whom you have granted *extraordinary indulgencies*,

196 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

is a VILLAIN!--nay, start not, sister, I'll prove it to you, though with concern, because the proof must blast your reputation; for your partial friendship for an hypocrite, will render *you* suspicious.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

Have a care, Madam!--you have a dangerous task! take notice I warn you of your danger!

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

When we proceed on facts, that can be fully proved, there is no danger.---A man, on the pinnacle of ambition! surrounded by power! under self-conviction, and such proof, wou'd stand tottering on a dangerous precipice!--Therefore, I must warn *you* of your danger, sister, of continuing your *Platonic sports*, with a man, who has prov'd, that the BODY has a greater share in that passion than the MIND! has prov'd it on your *maid*! your PREGNANT Genevive!

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

Genevive! you rave, Madam! what can no character escape your slander? not even a reverend character!

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

If you are not a witness of his hypocrisy, sister; a *confederate* hypocrite! in that I shall rejoice--But of this I am certain, that your maid, in my hearing,

hearing, confess'd herself debauch'd by our reverend friend: and the innocent, virtuous young man, who waits without, has been, just now, closeted, and threatened by his reverendship with a jail, if he does not speedily marry her to conceal their guilt, which, it seems, a *living witness*, a *child*! is going to bring to light.

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

It's mighty well, Madam, you'll answer this?  
(*Exit hastily.*)

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

Ay, and prove it, sister—She's strangely disorder'd! I fear with too much cause. Who's there?

*Re-enter* JACOB, *bowing.*

Observe me, Jacob; I am determin'd instantly to leave this house: I brought you hither, and besides that I am oblig'd to you—therefore you shall go with me.

JACOB.

Madam, I have no mistress here but you.

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

You assisted me the other morning in my distress, with so much concern, and have behaved yourself



198 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

so prudently ever since, that—I am sensibly affected with it.

JACOB.

What happiness is mine! heaven be prais'd for directing my way over the New Bridge! but as to the assistance I gave you, Madam, who cou'd see such a Lady as you taken ill, without being in pain for her? but there are some people whose faces make every body their friend; and one of those faces heaven has bestow'd upon you—pray, Madam, excuse my expressions.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Thou expressest thyself pleasantly, and so artlessly, that I can't help being pleas'd; but—more of this as we pass—I will take lodgings distant from this house—the place shall be a secret—let me see—a coach may be dodg'd—your arm, Jacob, shall assist me—wait for me below.

*(Exit Jacob.)*

Let me see——can I bear the sound of the real truth, now I am alone?——I have a secret liking to that innocent young man——nay, even a love beyond what I ever felt for the sex——He has an agreeable person, and seems to have a lively understanding: who knows, but making him a man of fortune, may lay him under such an obligation, as may prove him an indearing husband?——But,  
what

what says my Pride?—why, nothing. Nature whispers, that I am in the decline—and the men of mode say that few women's worth lasts longer than their beauty. Let *me* therefore pursue my private real happiness.

*Tho' Pride is hurt, and angry friends shou'd rail,  
Yet Nature—powerful Nature, will prevail.*

(Exit.

*End of the SECOND ACT.*

A C T III.

SCENE I. *Mrs. LA LAIN's House.*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun. JACOB, Mrs. LA LAIN.*

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

**I** Am sure, Madam, walking all over the house must have fatigued you——pray, sit down here, and let me fetch you some little refreshment——indeed, Madam, I will, for to confess the truth, Madam, you have a countenance I have long wished to be acquainted with——you'll pardon my frankness, Madam. *(runs out.)*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun. (laughing.)*

Ha, ha, ha, ha! what an extraordinary composition is this landlady of ours? what a deluge of no-purpose stories has she o'erwhelm'd us with, purely by the superfluous bounty of a tittle-tattle heart?

JACOB.

## JACOB.

She has open'd all her heart to us, Madam——let me see if I can remember the substance of it—she begun with her only daughter---run over all the actions of her infancy---what sickness she had---and left her at the present age of eighteen——then she fell upon the subject of her dear deceas'd husband—began with *her* courtship—told you how long it lasted—passed from that to their marriage—gave you an account of the life they led together—he was one of the best men in the world—mighty addicted to his study, and therefore, got a good deal by his knowledge and good management—he was naturally a little jealous, occasioned by the extraordinary love he bore her—that he was subject to the gravel (God knows what he suffer'd) the great care she took of him—in short, he died in a very christian manner—Speaking this, she wiped her eyes, for she really shed tears; which was because this melancholly part of the story required it, not because of the loss itself; for directly she went to something else, which made it as necessary to laugh, and accordingly she laugh'd.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Ha, ha, ha, ha! why, thou hast an admirable memory, and a deal of pleasantry in thy manner! I believe I shall like this woman---I was amused with her trifling narrations; they say, every woman's  
a gossip.

a gossip, or takes a pleasure in hearing those who are—I take her to be an honest well-meaning woman, and very religious, for I have remark'd her to be constant at chapel. It was necessary she should have some little knowledge of me, to prevent the questions, necessary, to be asked a stranger—you observed, I mention'd nothing before our landlady, that could give her the least suspicion of your being a servant---it is not possible she should guess it by your dress, therefore I charge you to regulate your behaviour by mine.

JACOB.

Dear Madam, heaven reward your good intentions. But---Madam---perhaps---this very notable landlady, may ask me a few questions concerning myself---she may say, who are you?---Now, Madam---who wou'd you please to have me to be?

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun. (smiling.)*

As to your name, you mean?—why, call yourself La Villa, your own name, and my kinsman, one who lives with me to manage my affairs---Mr. La Villa will sound well, it's a good name; besides, as I have already told you, we will soon make ourselves easy upon that article; a few hours will serve to determine my thoughts; and indeed, I must be sudden, for our circumstances won't admit of a delay.

JACOB.



JACOB.

O fortunate La Villa ! transporting cousin ! but yet, my fair cousin, was I to chuse my own quality, it shou'd not be that of your kinsman ; no, no, I have a better taste than that comes to ; the relationship does me honour, but sometimes, honour and happiness go together—is it not so, madam ?

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

I do not rightly understand you, La Villa (*smiling*) I cannot apprehend what this quality is you wou'd chuse ?

JACOB.

I must beg your pardon, madam, I dare not advance one step farther :—it wou'd not become me to forget the respect I owe you, tho' you are my relation.

*Re-enter Mrs. LA LAIN, a Servant following her with wine.*

Mrs. LA LAIN.

Pray, madam, sit here (*lifting a chair*) Sir, pray be seated (*they sit round the table*) I'll venture to say, here's a glass of as good Champaign as any in all Paris—come, madam, to your health—Sir, to your inclinations (*drinks.*) This young gentleman's

extra-

204 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

extraordinary modest look, makes me believe he was not bred in Paris.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

You guess right, Mrs. La Lain—He has been but a very short time in Paris.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Well, I think a modest young man, the most charming sight in the world !

JACOB.

Excepting one, madam.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Ay, Sir, pray what's that ?

JACOB.

A modest woman !

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Hah ! that's very smartly observ'd indeed, Sir—Lord, madam, this young gentlemen is as like my late husband, when he first made love to me, as one drop of water is like another.—Eighteen years ago, he was just such another sweet-temper'd, handsome, young man—but heaven was pleas'd to take him away—you look, and talk, Sir, for all the world as he talk'd !

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Ay, eighteen years ago, when he made love to you !

you!—but, Mrs. La Lain, was not his *style alter'd*, long before he died?

Mrs. LA LAIN.

Alas! madam, I am mightly alter'd since then—I am not the same—and yet, poor La Lain doated on me to the very last.

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

But most of you widows have an agreeable manner of praising your dead husbands; now I should be glad to know, Mrs. La Lain, what sort of impression this good husband has left in you—has it determin'd you ~~for~~ for the state of matrimony, or widowhood?

Mrs. LA LAIN.

Ay, lord, madam! there's a wide difference, for no poor creature was ever so distressed as I have been in the state of widowhood! such solicitations from new lovers—such offers! and yet for all that, I am sure I can never bear the thoughts of taking any man to bed to me—unless it be one that resembles my late dear husband.

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

Do you hear that, La Villa?—you must take care of your heart.

JACOB.

A person, madam, of Mrs. La Lain's attractions, must

must needs have lovers that wou'd be rivals too formidable for me.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Ay, you're a pleasant creature—one shou'd never be tir'd of you—Sir, I must confess, you wou'd meet with one, who is likely to prove very troublesome on such an occasion—one who is so solicitous, so confident, and so pressing—that—

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

He will certainly succeed—is it not so, widow?

*Enter SERVANT.*

*SERVANT.*

Madam, Mr. L'Blanc desires to speak to you.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

That's he!—don't you see I am engag'd, why did not you tell him so?—stupidity!

*(to the servant.)*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

O, by no means, Mrs. La Lain—we will not deprive you of so much pleasure, as the company of such a pressing gentleman.—Besides that, I have some business with my cousin La Villa—a letter, which I want him to write for me, which we will then take the opportunity of doing.

*Mrs. LA*

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

If so—why then, d'ye hear, tell Mr. L'Blanc, I'll wait on him this minute—you know, madam, you may command me. (*rising.*)

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Only to follow your inclinations, dear widow—  
nay, no ceremony. (*Exit La Lain.*)

JACOB.

Ha, ha, ha!

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Well, my merry cousin, shut the door, and now observe me, Mr. La Villa; for what I am going to say to you, is of great consequence to us both; but I fancy you can guess upon what our business turns.

JACOB.

Alas! my gracious madam—methinks I see something, but the fear of amusing myself, perplexes my sight, and what I see confounds me, because of my little merit—Good heaven, is it possible, that my person is not displeasing to you! this, madam, is what it seems to me, and if I was certain of it, I shou'd be blest indeed.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Yes, La Villa, since you understand me, and since it affords thee so much satisfaction, enjoy it in full security.

JACOB.



JACOB.

Can such a happiness be the portion of a poor country lad? O why was I a farmer's son!—why was my father unfortunate!

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Why, had you been rich, and in a condition to have told me, I love you, madam, wou'd you have told me so, La Villa?

JACOB.

With courage, and with transport, madam! but ever since I first saw you, I have done nothing but confess my passion—had I been worthy your attention, madam, you might easily have read, in my eyes, what my tongue was afraid to utter: they never look'd upon your's, but they talk'd to you, as I talk'd to you now; I was always in love, I adore you—words, which are wrote in every feature of my face!

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Well, child, observe me! When you met with me, I had been a long time weary of living with my sister, upon account of her unfociable temper; but not knowing what method of life to pursue, made me continue it; sometimes I had thoughts of boarding with the devotees—sometimes again I thought of marrying; I am not yet of an age to renounce that state, said I to myself; I have an  
handsome

handsome fortune, and if I cou'd meet with an honest man, of a good temper and good character, I should be happy for the rest of my days. I valued not whether he was rich or poor—nor was I more curious concerning his family, provided it was a creditable one—that is, only obscure, not vile, and despicable—for my parents were only substantial people of business; they made no figure—therefore, I waited till Providence, to whom I entirely referred myself, shou'd guide me to the man I sought for—and it was then I found him, when I met you on the New Bridge. You are he, for whom heaven has reserved me! you are the man I sought—with whom I ought to live—and to whom I give myself.

JACOB. (*kneeling.*)

On my knees let me receive this invaluable gift, undeserving as I am—all the advantage is mine—and all the bounty your's.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Rise, La Villa—yes—I will marry thee—and since our living together thus is liable to censure, we must hasten our marriage.

JACOB.

Surely, Madam, by the help of a friend, we may get a priest to bless us this night.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

True, we shall want a friend—I could wish for a discreet one; for I design to conceal our marriage for a little while, because of my sister—and I don't know who to get.

JACOB.

What think you of our landlady, Madam? she's an obliging sort of a woman, and may be prevailed on to keep our counsel.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

I agree to it—and the rather because it will put an end to those impertinent advances, she just now made you, and which, perhaps, she might otherwise continue. Who knows, but her lover, who is with her, may be of some use to us? I have some desire to see him—pri'thee child, fetch La Lain hither; tell her, I want to speak with her.

*(Exit Jacob, who first bows respectfully.)*

What worth! what real merit this youth discovers! this confirms the character I have had of him—that he is the son of a farmer, who lately liv'd in good repute, one who had given his children a good education.

*Re-enter*

Re-enter JACOB, with Mrs. LA LAIN,

Mrs. LA LAIN.

Well, my dear Madam, what are your commands with me ?

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

Pray sit down—Mrs. La Lain, you seem one of the best women in the world, and I have a secret to disclose to you, concerning an affair, in which you may be of service to me.

Mrs. LA LAIN.

O my dear Lady, what service can I do you ? pray speak—but stay, not yet—stay till I've shut the door ; for if it is a secret, no-body shou'd overhear us. (*she runs to the door.*) Javote ! Javote ! if any body comes to enquire for me, say I am gone out—Let no body come up to the Lady's apartment neither ; for we have a secret to talk of together, do you hear ? (*shuts the door, and returns.*)

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

O, Mrs. La Lain, you should not have told your servant, that we had a secret to talk of.

LA LAIN.

O, no matter, Madam—do not let that trouble you—if I had not given her that charge, she would have interrupted us—Come, Madam, what is this

P 2

affair ?

affair? I defy you to produce any body who wishes you better—without reckoning that I am the confidant of all my acquaintance; when they have once told me a secret, why mum for that! I have my mouth sew'd up—I am speechless—It was but yesterday, Mrs. Cocain, who has a husband that devours all before him, brought me a thousand livres to keep for her; he'd devour them too, if he knew where to find them; but I will warrant him for that—they are safe enough.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun. (aside to Jacob.)*

These proofs are but bad encouragement to us.

*JACOB. (aside to Mrs. Habberd.)*

But since you have promis'd her a secret, it wou'd, perhaps, be worse to refuse it her, than to tell it.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Come, come, Madam, pray speak.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

I shall have done, Mrs. La Lain, in two words.—It is this—Mr. *La Villa*, that you see here, and I, are going to be married.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

What, together?

*Mrs.*



*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Yes—I have consented to take him for a husband.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Ay, ay,—why it's mighty well—he is young—he will last a long time—pray, have you been long sweet-hearts ?

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun. (confused)*

Monstrous question !

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

But have you got your dispensation ?—you are cousins.

JACOB.

We have no need of one—we were only relations through decency, and to hinder the reflections of the world.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Ha, ha, ha, ha, ha! that's pleasant enough—why you tell me things I shou'd never have dream'd of.—Is it your wedding then, which you would consult me about ?

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

That is not all—we wou'd keep our marriage private, because of a sister I have, who perhaps might make a disturbance.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

A disturbance ! for what ? because of your age ? truly that wou'd be pretty indeed ! why, it was but last week, that an old Lady of threescore and ten, was married in our parish church, to a Cadet of twenty ! age is for the old—what business have other people to trouble their heads about it ?

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun. (confused)*

I am not so old neither, Madam.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

No, no, indeed—you are of an age to marry, if ever you do—after all one loves what one loves :—they may think you have a young husband—but what of all that ? you met with him young—if he's but twenty, that's no more your fault than his—let me tell you, Madam, the younger the better—why, he will have youth enough for you both—twenty years more—twenty years less---tho' it were thirty---the one is no more an offence to heaven than t'other---why, what can they say then ?—why, then the worst of it is, that he is young enough to be your son. If you had one, perhaps, he would not prove such a handsome spark—ay, ay, Madam, laugh at people's idle prate—and then tell me what farther ?

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun. (aside)*

O monstrous ! what will become of me ?

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Well—you wou'd keep your marriage private—is it not so? why, that will be very easy—you have no blab to fear—I have taken care of that—nothing can betray you—but go on, Madam.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

If you make such long comments upon every article, Mrs. La Lain, I shall never go on—but, in regard to my age, Madam, I am very glad to acquaint you, that I have no occasion to be afraid of people's idle prate—for at forty, which I am---

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Forty! why, that's nothing, Madam---why it is but twenty more than he is; truly, I took you to be more; but, it was his looks which deceiv'd me, in comparison of your's—Forty is nothing, Madam: Oh! your son may make you a mother yet.—Just over against us lives a Lady, who lay-in last month, at five and forty; and I warrant she won't stick out at five and forty---though, between you and I, her husband is threescore and twelve—Oh! it's mighty well—you are comely, and he is young; I will engage you will have children: but tell me---tell me—wou'd you have me help you to a Notary, to draw the contract? I will wait on you to mine; or shall I bid Javote go and desire him to step here?

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Have you forgot already, that I wou'd have my marriage kept a secret?

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Oh! no, no, no—we will go to him in private—are there any banes publish'd this morning?

JACOB.

That is the very affair in which Mrs. Habberd begs your assistance—as also to procure us another witness with yourself—and a priest.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Can any thing be more fortunate—there is Mr. La Blanc below in the parlour, the gentleman you sent me to, Madam, that will (to oblige me) do your business to the greatest nicety imaginable—He is intimately acquainted with a priest, one whom he proposes, shall do him the happy favour—he will suit you exactly—and d'you observe, Madam, who can be a more proper, or a more safe friend, and witness for you, than my humble servant, Mr. La Blanc—conclude it done, Madam—come come, —forty, and afraid of people's idle prate about your marrying! no, no, never let that disturb you —adieu, adieu, my dear Madam—your servant, Mr. La Villa. *(Exit La Lain.)*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

What a ridiculous woman is this—with her age!  
and

and her mother! and her son!—I am sorry I discovered our affairs to her, La Villa—If I am as old in thy eyes, as I appear to be in her's, I would not advise thee to marry me.

JACOB.

My dearest Lady, did not you perceive a little rancour at the bottom of all that? hark'ee, cousin, between you and I, if you was to drop me, I believe she would gladly pick me up, in case I was willing; which I should never be; for after you, all the women in the world would be as nothing to me—But, stay, my Lady, I will shew you your age (*runs to a little glass, and presents it before her.*) here, look at your forty.

Mrs. HABBERD, jun.

My dear child, you are very obliging—but I am really the age I mentioned—your good-nature is very acceptable, and I will instantly reward it—but, to our business—let me see—I must send for persons to new dress you directly—for these impertinent, notable people, are always swift in the execution of their designs—we must take care to be ready for them.

JACOB.

Let my tears thank you, for I cannot speak—  
and



218 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

and if I cou'd—words were not made to vent  
such thoughts as mine—

*With fortune blest---by such a charming wife!*

*Sure grateful Love must close my scene of life.*

*(Exeunt.)*

SCENE, *another Room in Mrs. LA LAIN's  
House.*

LA BLANC, *alone.*

LA BLANC.

Sure, of all the fatigues in life, the drudgery  
of a fortune-hunter is the most miserable; espe-  
cially when the female happens to be a notable  
widow. How impudent it is, to make a person of  
my figure and consequence wait thus? In short,  
the freedoms these vulgar people take, with us peo-  
ple of fashion, are very irksome—Oh! here she  
comes.

*Enter Mrs. LA LAIN, with her hood and scarf  
on, drawing on gloves.*

Hey-day! what now, my dear widow?

LA LAIN.

O, Mr. La Blanc, don't interrupt me, for we  
must

must have a wedding here, it seems, directly, and you must be assisting.

LA BLANC.

Assisting ! why, my dear widow, I not only propose to be assisting, but to be the chief actor in the ceremony—why, pray, are not you, and I, the principal persons concern'd ?

Mrs. LA LAIN.

You and I---no, no, there must go more words to that bargain.

LA BLANC.

What mean you ?—what am I to be jilted then ? must I live to see a successful rival ? unmerciful widow !

LA LAIN.

Why, Mr. La Blanc, this is strange, that a man of your wit, and parts, should be jealous ! there's never a brisk young fellow in town, tho' no wit, heaven knows, but thinks too well of himself, to think ill of his mistress—now that you should lessen your opinion of yourself—is it not a shame ?

LA BLANC.

Why, don't you say, here must be a wedding directly ?

LA

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Ay, and so there must---but it is between the Lady just come into my lodgings, about fifty years of age, and the prettiest, well-made, young fellow, of one and twenty!—ay, Mr. La Blanc---what charming follies are we women capable of committing?

*LA BLANC.*

Give me proof of it, widow, by committing the same, and call it by what name you please—if you have but as much faith and charity, as the Lady, I'll swear I have as much love as the gallant, and then let us have two weddings.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

I must confess I want a little of her faith--for you young fellows are apt to have desperate designs upon us widows---want of money makes as devout Lovers, as Christians.

*LA BLANC.*

But consider, dear widow; I offer you no less security than my liberty.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Ay, dear Sir, I fear, Liberty is as poor a pawn to take up money on, as honour. Young fellows, now-a-days, are like the desperate bankrupts of this age, who, if they can get people's fortunes in  
— their

their hands, care not, though they spend them in jail all their lives.

LA BLANC.

But you widows, are commonly so wise as to be sure your men are solvable before you trust 'em.

Mrs. LA LAIN.

And can you blame us? for my own part, I declare, I must know my man, over and over again, before I trust him—I hate to be deceived or disappointed: a disappointment is a sad thing, Mr. La Blanc!

LA BLANC.

Well, try me, try me, widow; and, if I either deceive or disappoint you, why then---I'm no true man.

Mrs. LA LAIN.

Well, well, all in good time, Mr. La Blanc---but at present, to the Lady's business.---I am going to fetch in the proper tradesmen, to new dress the young gentleman--and I have promis'd that you shall engage your reverend friend, Doctor---what d'ye call him, to marry them---it will be a good job, I'll answer for it, it will be well worth his while; you may tell him, she is a very generous, good-natur'd Lady---and, Mr. La Blanc, you are invited to the wedding, as my particular friend, and a person very proper to be a witness.

LA BLANC.

222 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT! Or,*

LA BLANC.

Yes---of their happiness—and pray, dear unforgivable widow—why must not they, at the same time, be a witness to mine?

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Fair and softly, good Mr. La Blanc, I'm in no such haste but, however, a good example, you know, is very prevailing.

*We all must yield, at last, do what we can,  
To the persuasive, and the pushing man.*

*(Exeunt.)*

*End of the THIRD ACT.*



## A C T IV.

SCENE, *Mrs. HABBERD's apartment in  
LA LAIN's House.*

*Enter JACOB alone, new dress'd.*

JACOB.

AND thus Jacob the poor peasant is metamorphos'd into the gentleman! How my heart beats under this silk lining! Oh, what pleasure! what magnificence!—for what's a handsome young fellow in an ordinary dress?—Why he's buried alive—he's nothing—such dupes are our eyes in that respect; or, if one's observ'd to be handsome, what merit is there in that? They'll cry, ay, ay, the man's well enough; there is but here and there a woman, less vain and coquetish than the rest, who has a better taste than this, and who won't be deceiv'd—one or two such I have met with.

*Mrs.*

224 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

*Enter Mrs. HABBERD, jun. and LA LAIN.*

*(Jacob bows to Mrs. Habberd respectfully.)*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

An amiable person like his, deserves the advantage of dress—what an air he has?

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

How, Madam! why he's perfectly charming! what a delicate shape is there!—well, when ever I marry, I'll take a man who has exact such a one.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Dy'e hear—that's no bad hint for you, La Villa; but, widow, methinks you are a little injudicious to give it before me, because that deprives the young gentleman of the liberty of making a proper reply.

*JACOB.*

But, Madam, in my opinion, that is the proof that Mrs. La Lain, has no covetuous meaning.

*Enter a Servant.*

*SERVANT.*

Madam, Mr. La Blanc is without.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Oh, my friend, Mr. La Blanc; Madam, who I have employ'd in your service; he is return'd from  
his

his friend the priest, who is to make you happy together—shall I introduce him, madam?

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

O, by all means. (*Exit La Lain, who returns directly with Mr. La Blanc.*)

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Madam, my good friend, Mr. La Blanc. (*salute.*)

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Ha! I have seen that face somewhere, let me recollect. (*aside.*)

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Mr. La Villa, Sir, the happy bridegroom.

*LA BLANC.*

In obedience to the commands of Mrs. La Lain, and to contribute to the happiness of such a well designing lady and gentleman, I have engag'd my reverend friend, to give you his blessing: and permit me to observe, how much this small service wou'd be overpaid, if I cou'd but engage such powerful advocates to plead my cause with this agreeable widow for two weddings, that we might be mutual witnesses of each others happiness.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Upon my word, Sir, it is but a reasonable request, and must be granted you—Surely, widow,  
 VOL. II. Q you

you can have nothing to say against it—we are witnesses that you have no aversion to marriage; therefore you can't exclaim against it now—besides, that method is only practis'd by desperate widows in despair—they always rail against marriage which (they say) is the widow's way to it.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Why, madam, wou'd you have us widows, as tractable as the wenches that eat oatmeal; and fool'd like them too?

*JACOB.*

But, Mrs. La Lain, I shou'd think, since the widow wants the natural allurements, which the virgin has, you ought to give men all proper encouragements.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Therefore, on the contrary, Sir, because the widow's fortune is her chiefest bait, the more careful she seems of it, and the more she withdraws it, the more eagerly the busy gaping fly will bite.—With us widows, husbands are got like bishopricks, by saying, no.

*LA BLANC.*

Why, then, dear widow.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Ay, but I must insist on it, that no man asks  
me

me the question, that has not an equal fortune to mine.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

And so, you have the conscience to expect the question to be ask'd you by a man that is young, rich, and handsome—come, come, widow, I have liv'd long enough in the world, to know that a young heir, is as shy of a widow, as of a rook—indeed widow, this behaviour of your's betrays a deal of coquetry—but a coquet humour is the very nature and inheritance of us women.

*Enter SERVANT.*

SERVANT.

There's a gentleman in black below, that enquires for Mr. La Blanc. (*Exit.*

LA BLANC.

Odsso, my friend, the priest!—a very welcome person, I presume, to this company; therefore, there needs no apology for introducing him. (*Exit.*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

How my heart beats at this important moment.

JACOB.



JACOB.

And mine o'erflows with love and gratitude.

*(La Blanc, re-enters with Doucin, who stops short in the posture of amazement! Mrs. Habberd screams and falls into a great chair—Jacob stands in the posture of a half-finish'd bow—and La Lain and La Blanc, in the utmost surprize!)*

DOUCIN, *(after a long silence.)*

What! are not the parties, who are to be the subjects of my mission, here then?

Mrs. LA LAIN.

Yes, Sir, here they are both—Mrs. Habberd and Mr. De La Villa.

DOUCIN.

What, Mrs. La Lain! do you call that young man, Mr. De La Villa, and is it he who is to be married to Mrs. Habberd?

Mrs. LA LAIN.

The very same, Sir—I know of no other, Sir.  
*(they whisper.)*

JACOB.

It is very likely that I make but a silly sort of a figure at present?—the impudent eyes of that  
curled

curled priest, are frightening me into the peasant again!

DOUCIN. (*after gazing at them.*

Mrs. La Lain, this affair requires a little consideration: pray let me speak a word or two in particular to you—if you please, we'll just step into the next room; I shall not detain you a moment.

Mrs. LA LAIN.

O dear! yes Sir—to be sure.

(*takes up a candle, and lights him out.*

LA BLANC. (*after a long pause.*

Pray, Sir, is it within the compass of your understanding to comprehend the meaning of all this? does Doctor Doucin know you then?

JACOB.

Yes, Sir, yes, yes, we have seen one another.

LA BLANC.

O, oh, why—here is a sort of a—something a—but, however, Sir, I hope we shall have a wedding.

JACOB.

I hope so, Sir, but not yet, as you will see presently,

Mrs. HABBERD, jun.

(*rising from her chair.*)

You say right, La Villa! for it shall be so, let them do their worst.

Q3

LA BLANC.

*LA BLANC.*

Pray, madam, can you guess then, what Mr. Doucin is gone to say to Mrs. La Lain.?

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Yes, Sir, I believe I can guess.

*LA BLANC.*

Why, really Madam, he's a very good man, a very faint-like man, this Mr. Doucin—he has been my friend and confessor a great while.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Well, Sir, I know him better than you; but we were not talking of his sanctity—they'll canonize him if he's such a saint: what's that to the purpose?

*LA BLANC.*

O Lord, madam, what I said, was only to shew you the esteem I have for him; I am sorry you don't like his behaviour; but that's none of my business—but undoubtedly you ought to believe this prudence of his, is for your good.

*Re-enter Mrs. LA LAIN.*

So, my dear widow, why you are return'd without Mr. Doucin; I hope he is not gone? If he has any exceptions to the marriage, I think he might have supp'd with us,

*Mrs. LA*

Mrs. LA LAIN.

Sup with us, truly that's a likely story! come, come, there will be no wedding to night; and if it never is, why so much the better—Ay, its an upright soul, this Mr. Doucin, and you are much obliged to him, madam—you can't think how he loves you, both you and your sister, poor, good man! he shed tears when he went away—I cou'd not help crying myself. (*in a crying tone.*) I have done nothing but wipe my eyes ever since. What news for this sister of your's!—Oh, good God, what will become of us!

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

What do you mean, Mrs. La Lain, by your exclamations?

Mrs. LA LAIN.

O, nothing at all, I'll warrant you; but I am astonish'd! no matter for your separation. One is not oblig'd always to live together—you may be as well here as there, but to marry in private; and then this new bridge, where the first meeting was; a husband upon the new bridge! you who are so pious! so wise! of a family! and so rich! Oh! oh! well—I say no more—do not trouble yourself, —I shall say no more—for I was desir'd to talk to you in secret; this is an affair which shou'd not be known to every body.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

And yet you tell it to every body.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

No, no, I speak of nothing but the meeting upon the new bridge—ask this gentleman, if he apprehends a syllable from that? nobody but you and the young man with you, understand what I say.

*LA BLANC.*

As for me—I understand nothing, but that it was on the new bridge, where Mr. La Villa and this lady came first acquainted; that's all.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Besides, it is but six days ago—but that is what I shan't say a word about.

*LA BLANC.*

Six days!

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Yes, six days, Mr. La Blanc—but speak no more on't, for you shall know nothing from me—It is in vain to ask me any questions—It is sufficient for us to talk, Mrs. Habberd and I—Come, come, let us sit down, and let Mr. La Villa sit down—since it is Mr. La Villa, not that I despise any body; he's a good young man, and a well behav'd young man, and there is no prosperity which I do not wish



with him—If he is not a Mr. yet, pehaps he may be.—A *servant* to day, and a *master* to morrow. There are a great many besides him, who have receiv'd wages, and afterwards come to pay wages.

LA BLANC.

Mr. La Villa receive wages !—what was he ever a servant to the gentlewoman who is present ?

Mrs. LA LAIN.

Well, Sir, no more of that—it is to-day, Mr. La Villa, you have him for such, take him for such—and so I say, let us sit down, and settle this matter.

LA BLANC.

For your sake, Mrs. La Lain, I suppose I shall follow your example---but, I must confess, one loves to sit down with people of ones own *rank*.

(*looking scornfully at Jacob.*)

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

This is mighty well---hark you, Sir, with your *rank*---if I mistake not, you once liv'd with my uncle, Mr. Notare, the attorney.

LA BLANC.

Umph ! why, I do just remember the man ; I did condescend once to be his clerk, Madam.

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

You condescended first to wear his livery, Sir ;  
and

and, I find his good intentions to make a man of you, you have industriously perverted into the worthless fop.

LA BLANC

This is an unlucky discovery—and before my mistress too---what an unfortunate dog am I?

(*aside*)

JACOB.

A word with you, Sir; there are but two sorts of people that talk much of their *rank*; the one are a set of *fools* that have nothing else to distinguish themselves by; and the other, a set of *scoundrels*, who, at the same time, are upon a level with the lowest of mankind.

Mrs. LA LAIN.

What, Mr. La Blanc, did you once wear a livery too? I am in fine company! why, what could you think, I shou'd ever be so weak as to marry a vulgar sharper? but without this discovery, Sir, I shou'd have made no leap in the dark, I assure you—I am no such fool—there's the door, Sir—I'll excuse your waiting at supper—and, La Blanc, you need not bring me the cup now, for I am not dry; ha, ha, ha, ha!

LA BLANC.

A word with you, brother Shoulder-knot—you see my fate, beware of your own; you must follow

me

me—for women were made to fool men ; they first fool their fathers ; then their gallants ; then their husbands—and when they are widows, they are qualified to fool the devil. ( *Exit.*

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Impudent blockhead !—but one shou'd expect nothing from such people but ill manners—but, come Madam, now we are alone, let us talk a little of your affair—it signifies nothing your crying and taking on at this rate—your wedding must be when heaven pleases—I only spoke my opinion through friendship, I had no design of affronting you.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

But you have affronted me in the highest degree, and if it was not for fear of offending heaven, I wou'd never pardon your behaviour—To tell all my affairs to such a worthless person, to insult a young man, whom you knew I valued, to treat him like a footman, tho' he never was one, but one hour or so by accident, and then to quote the new bridge, to make me pass for a fool, for a woman without sense or conduct, by repeating all the tittle tattle of a priest ; for what reason has he told you all these idle stories ? Let him speak in his own conscience—Is it for religion sake ? Is it for any concern he has for me, or my actions ? if he has such a friendship for me, why did he always

ways suffer my sister to use me so ill while we liv'd together? was it possible to stay with her? was there any such thing as bearing with her humours? he knows the contrary. Had I not resolv'd to marry one day, I must another—and, perhaps, I I shou'd not have met with such an honest man. Mr. De La Villa has sav'd my life—I shou'd have died perhaps, had not it been for him. He is of as good a family as I am; what wou'd they have? what does this priest mean? Interest is a fine thing truly: because I leave him, and because he can have no more of those presents, I us'd to make him every day, therefore he must persecute me—and here, a person under whose roof I lodge, and in whom I plac'd all my confidence, must expose me to one of the most cruel insults in the world! for can any thing be more mortifying than what has just now happen'd?

*(Here Mrs. Habberd falls again into her chair crying and sobbing.)*

JACOB.

My dearest, suffering lady—your faithful servant pays you tear for tear.

*Mrs. LA LAIN. (crying.)*

I have not met with any thing more moving a great while. O, my dear lady! how I am griev'd that I was not acquainted with all this sooner—Come, Mr. De La Villa, courage man! come, help

me

me to comfort this dear lady, who torments herself for a word or two, which I let fall unawares—but what cou'd I do? I cannot conjure: here a priest draws one aside, and says it is a pity it shou'd be a match; truly I believ'd him, for I had no notion of his little reasons, for being scandaliz'd at it—but as for his being a lover of presents—oh, I do not doubt it—Ay, ay, I have a friend, a great devotee, and she sends him many a good thing. You shou'd all do as I do, I talk of heaven as much as they will, but then I give nothing—There are three or four of your little hungry priests, frequent here; I receive 'em civilly—Good morrow to you, Sir,—good morrow to you, madam: sometimes take a dinner, then a game at quadrille, and, now and then, a word or two of edification by the by, and after that, your humble servant—I may marry twenty times instead of once, and they'll never trouble their heads about me—but, come, dear Madam, be comforted—what! you are no minor? you are in the right to marry Mr. De La Villa, and if it is not to night, why it may be the next, and that is only one night lost; I warrant you, let me alone for that.

JACOB.

What a strange medley is this woman compos'd of. (*aside*.)

Mrs. HABBERD, *jun.*

But, De La Villa, do you know any body who can  
protect



protect you here? for I am afraid my sister will occasion us some trouble; I will engage, this Mr. Doucin, has carried her the news already, and I know her temper so well, that I do not expect being left in quiet.

JACOB.

Provided you protect me, Madam, what harm can she do me? If I have your heart, what need have I for any other protection?

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Ay, but she has powerful friends, who may threaten and intimidate you; you are unexperienc'd; fear may seize you, and then you will desert me for want of resolution.

JACOB.

Desert you, Madam; yes, when I am dead, but whilst my soul and body are together, go where you will, they will follow you—It is not my nature to be timorous; wrong nobody, and fear nobody—Let them come—I love you, you are amiable; who can say to the contrary? Love is common to all the world—you are in love—I am in love—what worthy being is exempt from it? and when one loves, why one marries; honest people do so, and we do so—that is all.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Thou art in the right, La Villa, and thy intrepidity

pidity gives me new life—Heaven inspires thee with it! and the more obstacles we meet with, the dearer thou art to me.

*Mrs. LA LAIN.*

Upon my word, this is very pretty on both sides; I know by myself, you long to be kissing now, for nothing else can follow—Well, well, I'll leave you together for that purpose—why, you are really enough to make one's mouth water—I am glad, Madam, you are in the way to take a little comfort; adieu, happy lady ! *(Exit.)*

JACOB.

Incomparable, matchless, penetrating widow! she reads my wishes in my eyes. This dear hand (*seizing it*) is mine, where I will pour forth all my longing heart, devour it with kisses, (*kissing it*) O, what a cruel trick this priest has play'd us.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Go, go, La Villa, this is not a proper time for us to give way to such tenderness—who's there?

*Enter Servant.*

SERVANT.

Sir, here's one without wants to speak with you.

JACOB.

With me, say you?

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Is it any one of the family?

SERVANT.

No, Madam, it is a stranger, a gentleman just come in.

JACOB.

I'll go to him. (*going.*)

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Stay, La Villa, you shall not stir, let him come here to speak to you—send him up. (*Exit Servant.*)  
My mind misgives me—who can this be?

*Enter a GENTLEMAN.*

GENTLEMAN.

Do not you call yourself De La Villa, Sir?

JACOB.

Yes, Sir, pray what are your commands?

GENTLEMAN.

I come from Mr. President, the chief magistrate in Paris, who desires to speak to you.

JACOB.

With me, Sir? sure you mistake—it must be  
some

some other De La Villa, for I neither know Mr. President, nor ever saw him in my life.

GENTLEMAN.

That may be, Sir, but it is you he wants. It is you are the person, who courts a gentlewoman call'd Mrs. Habberd: I have a hackney coach waiting below, and you cannot dispence with going. I am sent to oblige you to it, therefore it signifies nothing to refuse: but, Sir, there is no harm meant you—he only wants to speak with you.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Sir, I have the honour of knowing a lady who is related to the President, and who lives in the house with him, Mrs. Ferval: and I imagine this affair concerns me too, I will go with you; do not disturb yourself, Mr. De La Villa, this is all owing to my eldest sister—I am certain we shall find her at Mr. President's, and perhaps Mr. Doucin with her—is not he with her, Sir?

GENTLEMAN.

No, Madam, your sister came alone

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Well, we will see what's to be done—You shall not wait long, Sir, I will just fetch my hood and scarf.

GENTLEMAN.

I must beg your pardon, Madam, I was expressly order'd to bring Mr. De La Villa alone. I suppose they foresaw you wou'd be coming with him, since they gave me that positive order, therefore you must not go. I beg pardon for the refusal, Madam, but I must obey.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Ha! what precautions are here? what strange measures are these? Well, Mr. De La Villa, you shall go first then, and go boldly—I shall be there almost as soon as you—I'll send for a chair this minute, and follow you.

GENTLEMAN.

I wou'd not advise you to it, Madam, for I am also directed to tell you, that, at this time, you will be deny'd admittance.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

How, Sir! what is the meaning of this? the President has the reputation of being a very worthy gentleman, every body speaks well of him; what can induce him to act so contrary to his character? what does his being President, empower him to send for a man he has no business with, and that as peremptorily as if he sent to apprehend a criminal? Truly I do not know what to think of it.—I inter-

rest



rest myself in what concerns Mr. De La Villa, I own it; and it is my advice, he should not go.

JACOB.

By no means, Madam; I am afraid of nothing; at present, Madam, I must take all in good part. To your little fellows, they say, the President commands you to come—why let it be so, the President shall see me—What! we are in a christian country—I carry a good conscience, and heaven's above all still; come, Sir, let us march, I am ready.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Well, then I consent to it—for, indeed, what can he say, or do, to you?—Go, may heaven protect thee, before do not stay—remember I shall expect you with impatience.

JACOB.

Adieu, my charming mistress! my all that's dear to me! yes, I will return immediately.

*(Exit Jacob and Gentleman.)*

*(Mrs. Habberd, jun. throws herself weeping into her arm chair.)*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun. (after a pause.)*

O, for some revenge! some sweet revenge on this malicious, wicked priest, and this enrag'd sister! and yet, in the midst of my resentment, I am

R 2

capable

capable of feeling some pity for her—How surprising it is, that people can so severely persecute the failings of others, and forget their own—They must know conscious, painful moments—but by an affected behaviour of outrageous virtue, and coyness, they think they cover all—but surely *coyness* is as little sign of true *modesty* in a woman, as *buffing* is of true *courage* in a man; and we are much mistaken if we think, that men are always stout from a principle of valour, or women chaste from a principle of virtue.

*Enter a Servant.*

SERVANT.

Madam, here's a young woman without, desires to speak with you; she says she was your sister's servant.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Ha, Genevive! pray send her in.

*Enter GENEVIVE. (weeping.)*

What, weeping Genevive? what misfortune has befallen you? Has the good Director forsaken you? his pious friendship is a sure refuge from affliction.

GENEVIVE.

His pious friendship is the cause of my affliction,  
Madam;

Madam; he is a villain! I have been turn'd out of my place on his account, and know not what will become of me.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun. (aside.)*

Ha, this may be lucky! I am very sorry for you, Genevive, and will gladly assist you—Pray tell me what has befallen you, since I left the house? deal freely with me, I know your intrigue with him; therefore speak freely.

GENEVIVE.

You were no sooner gone, Madam, but your sister came to me, with eyes sparkling with rage—she told me I was an infamous creature to scandalize a divine, that I shou'd be punish'd with the utmost severity the law cou'd inflict; and so, without waiting for a reply, she very fairly turn'd me out of doors.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

But surely the churchman, you have entrusted with your honour, will protect you at this juncture?

GENEVIVE.

Why, one wou'd think, Madam, one might safely trust a churchman—but for the future, tho' I must trust them with my soul, I have made a vow, never to trust any of 'em with my body again.

246 *The* FORTUNATE PEASANT: *Or,*

No—I'll sooner trust a fool with my secret, or a gamester with my money, than a priest with any more of my favours.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Poor Genevive!—but did Mr. Doucin really consent to this?

GENEVIVE.

He did not appear in it; and, perhaps, he was oblig'd to consent to it—I once thought he lov'd me, Madam, and I have still some hopes from that.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Ah, Genevive! 'tis hard trusting to a man's love, who has had all he wanted; besides 'tis likely he will sacrifice you to his reputation, unless you have some proof against him.

GENEVIVE.

I have no proof, but my own word, which will scarce be taken against him; for you know, Madam, his cunning, and hypocrisy, has impos'd so on the world, that he passes for a saint.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

'Tis therefore necessary to oppose cunning with cunning—have you heard from him, since you came away?

GENE-

GENEVIVE.

No, Madam.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Well then, if you will follow my direction, I have a scheme, that will put him entirely in your power, and force him to provide handsomely for you.

GENEVIVE.

Dear Madam, I am forever beholden to you, and will follow your advice punctually.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

I have no view, child, but to serve you, and if this opportunity be lost, fortune may never favour us with another—This, then, is my advice—I know my sister is at this time from home, on business that will detain her some time. I wou'd have you embrace this opportunity to make your way to the doctor; in order to which, a disguise wou'd be proper, that you might pass the servants unobserv'd—what think you of a suit of boy's cloaths? you have a smartness in your air, Genevive, that wou'd become the breeches—who knows but such a metamorphose in dress (which wou'd certainly look well on you) may rouse the amorous disposition of the Dominee, which you wou'd do well to encourage, that your designs on him may be the safer accomplish'd; before bring him to a full con-



fession, and then, at that juncture, we will appear, and by that discovery of his guilt, oblige him to come to your own terms.

GENEVIVE.

Upon my life, Madam, this will do; I know he values his character more than his soul, and will do any thing, rather than be publickly expos'd.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Well, then, you approve my project?

GENEVIVE.

Nothing can be better laid, Madam—and for your certain admittance to us there, I can help you. From the back stairs, there is a door opens into his study, which you may remember, Madam, he order'd should be fasten'd up—that was done, that no one might have admittance there, but me—I have the key about me, here it is Madam. (*gives it.*) This will secure you an entrance, because it is likely he will fasten the other doors—you know his cunning, Madam.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Very well—step into my chamber, where we will consult further, and then about it instantly.

(*Exit Genevive.*)

This is the luckiest adventure, that cou'd have happen'd for my consolation; but my revenge on  
this

this priest, will not be compleat, unless my sister is a witness of his baseness. I must contrive that, as well out of hatred to him, as some remains of affection to her; for to convince her of her error, is the surest way of procuring quarter for my own.

*Suspend your censure, ye fair taitling tribe;  
Pursue these maxims, which you oft prescribe:  
Nor to vain triumph, let your hearts incline;  
Correct your failings first, then censure mine.*

*(Exeunt.)*

*End of the FOURTH ACT.*

A C T V.

SCENE, *The President's House.*

*The PRESIDENT, Mrs. FERVAL and Mrs.  
HABBERD, sen. are discover'd.*

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

**M**ADAM, pray rest assur'd, Mr. President will do every thing in his power to save your sister from the misfortune, such a scandalous marriage must involve her in,

*PRESIDENT.*

Pray, Madam, compose yourself: If the facts appear as you have related them, some means must be found to prevent this ridiculous marriage,

*Enter Gentleman.*

*GENTLEMAN.*

Sir, the young man you sent me for, attends your pleasure.

*PRE-*

PRESIDENT.

Send him in.

(Exit Gent.

Enter JACOB, *who bows respectfully to the company.*

What! is it thou then, that this lady's sister is about to marry?

JACOB.

Yes, Sir; at least I have her word for it, and to be sure, I shan't be against any thing, which is so much for my honour and happiness.

PRESIDENT.

Marry thee! art thou qualified to be her husband? don't forget that thou art her servant?

JACOB.

I shou'd not find any difficulty in forgetting it, Sir, for I was only so, for an hour or so, by accident.

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

See, the brazen face! how he answers you, Mr. President?

Mrs. FERVAL.

O, Madam, you are in a passion! he must have leave to answer Mr. President's questions—there's no offence in that—let us hear what he says.

PRE-

PRESIDENT.

How! pray why do'st tell me that thou wert only her servant, for an hour, by accident, since thou art, actually, in her service now?

JACOB.

I am *at* her service, Sir, as I am at your's—I am very much her servant, her friend, and her suitor, Sir, that's all.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

Why, you little sorry rascal, can you lie then so impudently at your age? Come, lay your hand upon your heart, and remember that you are in the presence of heaven, who hears us both: did not my fool of a sister, meet with you in the street? was not you a vagabond, without knowing where to go, when she pick'd you up? what wou'd have become of you, but for her? must not you have been forc'd to have begg'd your bread, had not she took you out of charity? poor, foolish woman, it wou'd have been happy for her to have had no pity on you—It's plain, her charity was not pleasing to heaven, since it is follow'd by so great a misfortune to herself! what a wandring, Mr. President, was this! Here she passes over the new bridge one morning, meets with this worthless fellow—brings him home—for my part, I did not like him.—

*Mrs. FER-*



Mrs. FERVAL. (*aside.*)

For my part, I do.

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

But keep him she wou'd, in spight of my advice, and the *inspiration of a holy man*, who endeavour'd to dissuade her.

Mrs. FERVAL. (*aside.*)

Ay—but there's more *inspiration* in that handsome young fellow, than in all the priesthood together.

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

She quarrels with this holy man—separates from me—takes lodgings in another place, and there goes to live with this scoundrel—doats on him, and must be his wife forsooth! the wife of a footman, at forty years of age!

Mrs. FERVAL.

Oh! forty is nothing in that respect, Madam; besides—is your sister so old? but you are in a pet, Madam; I think I heard her say she was about my age, and if so, she must be near ten years younger than you say.

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

Oh! Madam, I know my sister's age very well; I'm almost two years older than she—yes, yes, Madam, she's forty, and I think at that age one  
may

254 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

may pass for an old woman; for my part I own myself to be such—It is not every one that bears their age like you, Madam.

*Mrs. Ferval.*

Like me, Mrs. Habberd! why where are you rambling? Am I call'd in question, pray? I bear my age, say you! I suppose I bear it as well as another, Madam! but surely, there's no great miracle in a persons bearing their age well at my years.

PRESIDENT. (*smiling.*)

Indeed, Mrs. Habberd makes the belle age very short—wrinkles don't come so soon as that neither; but, Ladies, pray let us dismiss this discussion of ages.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

Yes, Sir, it is not my sister's years that I regard in this affair, it is the condition of the husband she is about to take—It is the baseness of her choice—Consider, Sir, what a scandal it will bring upon our family—we are forbid to dishonour ourselves, and people will say, that my sister has married a beggar—I therefore, Sir, intreat that you'll prevent this disgrace from falling on us—It will be a labour for her good, and we ought to have compassion on her—I have recommended her this afternoon to the whole community of devotees—Mrs. Ferval, I am sure, won't refuse me her's.

*Mrs.*

Mrs. Ferval.

Indeed, my prayers seem something ungrantable on this occasion. *(aside.*

Mrs. Habberd, *sen.*

And you, Sir, will have your part in this good work, if you'll be so kind to assist us with your authority.

PRESIDENT.

Don't disturb yourself, Madam—He shall not marry your sister—He dares not make any further attempt; if he does, we shall find away to hinder him—but he won't give us the trouble; and to make him amends for what we deprive him of, I'll take care of him myself.

JACOB.

*(Approaching and bowing respectfully to the President.)*

Mr. President—I have let Mrs. Habberd speak without interruption, and have patiently heard all the injurious things she has been pleas'd to say of me—therefore, Sir, at present I hope I am to speak.

Mrs. Ferval.

Every one in their turn—it is but reasonable—He's a handsome well behav'd fellow, and seems to have something to say for himself. *(aside.*

JACOB.

You were pleas'd to say, Mr. President, that if  
I re-

256 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

I resolve to marry Mrs. Habberd the younger—you'll hinder me—to which I answer, that if, *I am* hinder'd, I must desist of necessity; there's no encountering with impossibilities—but, Sir, if I am *not* hinder'd, I *will marry* her, that's certain.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

There's impudence for you, Mr. President!

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

There's sense! there's spirit!—Egad, he's a charming fellow!

*(aside.*

JACOB.

We come now to the aspersions, which have been cast on me—I do not know, Sir, how far they are consistent with devotion; she said *heaven bears us*—so much the worse for her, for I'm sure the expressions she us'd, were not very decent—In short, according to her, I am a scoundrel, and a beggar; her sister a fool—a poor old runaway—none of which, Sir, can belong to any but the *off-scowerings* of the earth. For example, Mr. President—you see Mrs. Habberd here—suppose you was to talk to her, in the same stile as you talk to me—thee this—thee that—who art thou? she'd think it very strange; she'd say, you treat me with ill manners, Sir—and you yourself wou'd acknowledge her in the right—Madam is the proper word. You use it, always complaisantly, Madam; and to me, always thee and

and thou. Not that I complain of this, Mr. President, I have nothing to say against it; it is the custom of you great ones—therefore, Sir, what I've said is only by way of comparison; because this Madam, here, to whom it wou'd be rude to say thee, is hardly any more a *Madam* than I am a *Sir*—

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

How! Mr. Impudence.

JACOB.

Permit me to go on—I'll prove it to you.

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

And if he does—I will contrive some method or other to kiss him for't, that's certain.

JACOB.

Was the late Mr. Habberd, your father (heaven's peace be with him) was he a beggar, Madam? No, he was the son of a good farmer, of Beauce—and you have been well inform'd that I am the son of a good farmer of Champagne—there's farm for farm.

PRESIDENT.

What De La Villa, of Champagne, that fail'd lately, and having a large family, died of a broken heart, was he your father?

VOL. II.

S

JACOB.



258 *The* FORTUNATE PEASANT: *Or,*

JACOB.

The same, Sir.

PRESIDENT.

I have seen him—he was an honest man.

JACOB.

You see, Madam, your father and mine, as much beggars one as the other; he was a tradesman, was he not? perhaps I may be one—and then there will be shop for shop—as it is—you ladies, his daughters, are but a shop better than me—the odds isn't much—you are only a degree above me. Do such people as you, who profess yourselves devoted to heaven, stand upon degrees? especially when there is but one to object against.

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

How charmingly has he reveng'd himself, and me, on this odious creature! *(aside.*

JACOB.

As to the place where I met your sister—why it's a public one—I pass'd over it—she pass'd over it—and it's as well meeting there as any where, when one's to meet at all—But you say, I must have begg'd but for her—Oh, —not the same day by a great many, Madam—had I not gone with her, perhaps, I must soon have return'd home to  
the

the farm—I frankly confess it—for I do not understand your evasions; It's a fine thing to be rich—but none but fools brag of it. And after all, is my adventure such a wonder?—here a person is young, of an honest family, who leaves that family to seek his fortune—what riches can you expect him to have? He has little enough to be sure, but he goes in quest of more; and I was in quest of more, when your sister comes and asks me, who I am? I tell her; will you live with us? cries she, we are only two sisters devoted to heaven. With all my heart, Madam, *replies* I, and 'till I shou'd mend myself, *follows* her—we chat by the way, I acquaint her with my name, my station in life, and give her a detail of my family; after which we come to you—and you (by the advice of a truly pious divine) quarrel with her on my account—you part—she takes me with her—We are no sooner alone, but the thoughts of matrimony come into her head—I find myself inclin'd that way—she esteems me—and I revere her—I am a farmer's son, and she, a farmer's grand-daughter—she ne'er cavils for a degree more, or a degree less—a shop here, or a shop there; she has wealth enough for us both, and I have gratitude enough for a dozen—And now, I ask you, Mr. President, who know justice by heart—and that agreeable, discerning lady,

lady, who, I dare say, has a good conscience, where is the great injury I do you ?

*(A long pause, during which Mrs. Habberd's eyes are fix'd on Mr. President.)*

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

What, Sir ! will you abandon me then ?

PRESIDENT.

I shou'd be very glad to serve you, Madam, but what wou'd you have me do, in this case ? I understood the affair quite different ; and if what he says is true, it is neither just, nor possible to oppose a marriage against which there's no objection, but its being liable to ridicule, on account of the disproportion of ages.

Mrs. FERVAL.

As to that, one sees more disproportion'd matches every day—this won't be very visible, for your sister is very comely still, Madam, you find she is her own mistress.

PRESIDENT.

And this young man has nothing against him, in reality but his youth.

Mrs. FERVAL.

And surely there can be no crime in having a young husband, ha, ha, ha.

PRE-

PRESIDENT.

Ha, ha, ha.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

It's mighty well—this is you who promis'd me so cordially, to engage Mr. President to interpose his authority—lord! lord! what will this world come to? for only telling this lady that she bore her age well at my sister's years—see! I've lost her good graces already! who cou'd ever divine that one was still a nymph at forty? Adieu, youthful lady! Mr. President, I am your servant.

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

Infotence!

*(Exit Mrs. Habberd.)*

PRESIDENT.

Go, go, young man, get married, there's nobody here has a word to say against it.

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

I wou'd also advise him to make haste, for this malicious sister has ill intentions.

PRESIDENT.

Let her take what method she will, her ill intentions will signify nothing—I can't see what she can do.

*Enter Gentleman.*

GENTLEMAN.

Sir, the company you expected, are coming in the gate.

*Exit President and Gent.*

S 3

*Mrs,*

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

Come, you shall carry a letter for me to your Mrs. Habberd, she's a very good woman, I always lov'd her better than this unmannerly sister, and therefore shou'd be glad to inform her, how things have pass'd here—Pray sit down. (*She takes the paper and pens to write.*) Indeed child, I was very much against you at first—this inrag'd creature that's just gone, had spoke so much to your disadvantage, that your marriage appear'd the most astonishing thing in the world; but I was of another mind, as soon as I saw you; your countenance destroy'd all the ill she said of you: and really you have a handsome one; a very happy one—Mrs. Habberd the younger is in the right.

*JACOB.*

I am very much oblig'd to you, Madam, for your good opinion of me, and will endeavour to deserve it.

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

Yes, I think mighty well of you—extremely well!—I am charm'd at your adventure!—and this cross sister shou'd play you any new tricks you may depend upon it, I'll serve you against her

(*during this she is trying all the pens, but finds none to please.*)

What wretched pens are here!—how old are you

*JACOB*



JACOB.

One and twenty, Madam.

Mrs. FERVAL.

That's the right age to make your fortune—you only want some kind friend to help you to push it. Come, come, I'll serve you well—I shall like Mrs. Habberd the better, for her choice of you—she has a good discernment—you have the finest complexion in the world.

JACOB.

So—here's another devotee, taken with my person—here's fine food for my vanity! (*aside.*)

Mrs. FERVAL.

Pray shall you marry to night?

JACOB.

I believe I shall Madam.

Mrs. FERVAL.

But tell me—Mrs. Habberd has a great love for you child—I don't question it, nor am I at all surpriz'd at it—but (*smiling.*) between you and I—have you any love for her, what one properly calls love, I don't mean gratitude, for of that she deserves a great deal at your hands; but has she any real charms in your eyes, quite old as she is?

JACOB.

It is plain this lady wou'd have me say, no; I must.

must confess I have not honesty enough to speak the truth, because I see it wou'd disoblige her.

(*aside*)

*Mrs. Ferval.*

Yes, yes, I understand that silent smile,—you have more gratitude than love, I don't doubt it—but the woman has not been disagreeable formerly.

JACOB.

I think so, Madam.

*Mrs. Ferval.*

Yes, yes, she's very passable now—and as her sister says, she's forty—It was no fault of mine that she was not younger, for I represented her of my age, to make her the more excusable—had I sided with this eldest sister—I shou'd have hurt you with the President, which was not my design.

JACOB.

I very well observ'd, Madam, the protection you honour'd me with.

*Mrs. Ferval.*

True, you saw I declar'd myself openly enough, as I do now—I can't help putting myself in her place; It wou'd indeed, have been too much affliction for her at her age to have lost you—You see I have good wishes for you.

JACOB.

JACOB.

Where will this end? (*aside.*) I shall think myself happy, Madam, if you will always please to preserve these favourable sentiments for me.

Mrs. FERVAL.

(*writing her letter.*)

Your father—pray was he a handsome man? Is it he you resemble, or your mother?

JACOB.

My mother, Madam.

Mrs. FERVAL.

(*after writing more.*)

Your adventure with this old maid, whom you are going to marry, is very singular, (*smiling.*) she must have good eyes, as retir'd as she has liv'd; pray behave well to her, I exhort you child—and afterwards dispose of your—your heart as you will, for at your age its seldom kept.—but—apropos—tell me ingeniously—have you any one in view, at present? do you actually love any body?

JACOB.

I have one in view, at present, Madam.

Mrs. FERVAL.

Well, provided you are sincere, I'll forgive you, but, tell nobody so but me—you must be cautious  
my

166 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

my child—for these old women are naturally jealous—hark! I hope we have not been overheard—I should be fretted at that—Come, I'll not send this letter—I'll go with you, to Mrs. Habberd—this strange accident will apologize for the lateness of the visit—and as soon as you are married come and acquaint me with it, here, where I live; come in an evening—when we'll consult some way or other to—to serve you.

*(She gives her hand in a manner that invites Jacob to kiss it, which he does.      (Exeunt.)*

SCENE II. *Mr. DOUCIN's Apartment, in  
Mrs. HABBERD's sen. House.*

*DOUCIN discover'd alone.*

DOUCIN.

I am strangely perplex'd with this dangerous posture of affairs. I must think of some way of pacifying Genevive—and tho' Mrs. Habberd's turning her out of doors, is a proof of her resentment to her, it is not quite clear she disbelieves that full accusation against us. Some doubt must remain, and jealousy is bred in doubts; when those doubts change into certainties, then the passion either ceases, or turns to absolute madness.

*Enter*

*Enter* SERVANT.

SERVANT.

Sir, there's a young gentleman without desires to speak with you.

DOUCIN.

Send him in.

*(Exit Ser.*

*Enter* GENEVIVE, in Boys Cloaths.

GENEVIVE.

Is your name, Doucin, Sir?

DOUCIN.

The same, Sir, what is your pleasure?

GENEVIVE.

Faith, Sir, my affair is far from a pleasurable one—no, Sir, the pleasant part of it is over—why don't you see repentance in my face, Sir?

DOUCIN.

I can see confidence in your face, Sir, as well as unbecoming levity, in your behaviour, which is a little improper here: It will be unsafe to affront me, Sir.

GENEVIVE.

Lord, Sir—I find you studious men of the church



268 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

church, are unacquainted with the polite behaviour of us young fellows of wit and parts—but, my dear reverend Sir, so far from affronting you, I am directed, by my good friend, Mr. La Blanc, to make my complements to you, as to my confessor, (*pulls out a purse.*) but not so much for absolution for my sin, as for your advice how to avoid the bad consequences of it in this world—for as to the other, I am too fine a gentleman to trouble my head about that—In a word Sir, I have debauch'd a foolish, fond, believing wench—which I suppose, you rigid men of the church call a sin, but in my opinion, my only crime is, that I have got her with child; for that brings on a discovery, and is likely to entail a wench and a bastard on me, 'till they grow insufferable—Now, Sir, what wou'd you advise me to do?

*silence* DOUCIN.

All laws, divine and human, command you to marry her.

GENEVIVE.

What! marry my punk? demme ye, Sir!

*silence* DOUCIN.

How, young Sir! I shall be angry.

GENEVIVE.

And so shall I Sir, for demme if I was ever so much

much affronted in my life!—I expected you wou'd have advis'd me to strangle the bastard, and poison the mother, and to have assisted me in it wou'd have been friendly.

DOUCIN.

I am more likely to assist in the strangling you, Sir, for your impudence. (*offering to seize her.*)

GENEVIVE.

(*laying her hand to her sword.*)

S'death take care! Sir, or I shall be in your body.

DOUCIN

Nay, then (*seizing her, the peruke falls off.*) ha! what do I see, Genevive!

GENEVIVE.

You see I can threaten, Sir, but am no more able to execute, than if I were a real beau.

DOUCIN.

My little Genevive! what an agreeable surprize is this, but why in this disguise?

GENEVIVE.

The better to obtain your real advice, Sir, what I am to do. I have already told you the case, Sir, but now the worst of it is, I am on the female side of the question.

DOUCIN.

Ay, you are to be poison'd, you know!—but  
come

270 *The* FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,

come my little Genevive, I wanted to see you; and am charm'd with thy invention, because I can enjoy that pleasure even here, on dangerous ground, without the fear of a discovery; let me survey thee, that dress has enchantment in it—you look so roguish—so provokingly handsome, that I had almost forgot my wrongs, and the gross affront you gave me just now—therefore my little hero, I challenge you, to give me satisfaction in the next room.

GENEVIVE.

O lord, Sir, never put me to it, for I am but a very harmless bully, I shall certainly drop down, and faint away in the engagement.

DOUCIN.

If you do, I shall certainly fall with you, and perhaps, faint too, for I have not been in so dangerous a way a great while—but since there will be no dishonour in the defeat, I dare make the attack therefore come on, for I am passionately fond of you

GENEVIVE.

They say, the more passionately a man loves his mistress, the readier he is to hate her.

DOUCIN.

Nay, nay, you have too much good sense to want compulsion.

(lays bel.<sup>d</sup> of her.

GENE-

GENEVIVE.

But my modesty.

DOUCIN.

Modesty among lovers is as impertinent as ceremony among friends ; no more trifling.

GENEVIVE.

I shall disappoint you, my hot Dominee—but I must dally with him 'till the arrival of my witnesses.

(*Exit Doucin pulling her out.*)

SCENE *continues.*

*Enter Mrs. H A B B E R D, senior, and  
Mrs. H A B B E R D, junior.*

*Mrs. H A B B E R D, jun.*

I beg, sister, you will suspend all further resentment 'till I have prov'd the facts I have asserted ; you can't be angry at this kind endeavour to undeceive you ; I have long since known your love for Mr. Doucin, and where we love, this reluctance to believe *them* base, is natural—it is the common fault of people in love, that they are not sensible when they cease to be lov'd.

*Mrs. H A B B E R D, sen.*

Lord, Sister ! is there no such thing as true love in the world ?

*Mrs.*

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

I fear, Sister ! it is with true love, as with ghosts and apparitions, a thing every body talks of, but scarce any body hath seen.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

I thought it was not in the power of the most crafty dissimulation, to conceal love long, where it really is, nor to counterfeit it long, where it is not; but that Mr. Doucin, shou'd be a hypocrite in his religion, as well as his love, is what I am unwilling to believe.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

I have long since observ'd, Sister, that those who are eternally canting upon religion and virtue, in all companies, are commonly great boasters, and great knaves; the mighty pains they are at to commend virtue, is often a shrewd sign, that they take but little to practice it. An instance of this shall be produc'd you now. You heard the servant say, that a young gentleman is with Mr. Doucin, that young gentleman I know to be Genevive; and you see sister—they are adjourn'd to the bedchamber, on a private conference.

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

Furies and plagues !—O torture !

*Mrs.*



*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Be patient—I hear 'em coming—let us retire  
behind this screen. *(they retire.)*

*Re-enter GENEVIVE, followed by DOUCIN.*

DOUCIN.

My dearest Genevive, what mean you by this  
provoking behaviour? 'tis monstrous now! now,  
when you look so lovely, so bewitchingly hand-  
some!

GENEVIVE.

Lord, Sir, you praise me, as if you had a mind  
to part with me—and yet I hope, you resolve to  
keep me to yourself.

DOUCIN

Keep you, child! don't I endeavour it and you  
fly from me—prithee, unfold this riddle—why do  
you deny me a repetition of those joys which we  
have revell'd in?

GENEVIVE.

Why, to confess the truth, an accident has hap-  
pen'd, that has made me set a little more value on  
the favour than I ever thought to have done. A  
few hours ago, an embroider'd beau of quality

274 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

met me, and bid me an hundred louisdores; and if it is worth that now, you, Sir, have had a lumping pennyworth.

DOUCIN.

O, I understand you—if the favour is to be purchased, I'm your old chapman, Genevive—here—I'll bid all I have about me for it.

*(pulls out his purse.)*

GENEVIVE.

Fie, fie, Sir! do you think I'd sell my rarity? what, do you think me mercenary?

DOUCIN.

Nay, then I ask your pardon. *(putting it up.)*

GENEVIVE.

What, you take it ill I refuse your money?—rather than that should be, give it me. *(takes it and puts it up.)* But it is quite impossible for me to comply with your desires now, because it would look as if I sold my favours, and only held out for a price; besides it would be downright shameful to take a gentleman's money for a thing that he has purchased an hundred times.

DOUCIN.

Why, thou capricious creature! thou riddle thou woman! thou beau! which is, if possible,

more

more insignificant being! what must I do with you? would you have me ravish that favour from you, which (but for this enchanting metamorphose in dress) I was almost cloy'd with? Why, what the devil, has the foolish wench put on modesty with her breeches.

GENEVIVE.

No, Sir; I have only put on a little discretion with my breeches, and, (raillery apart) if you please, we will apply to a business that will require you to be serious—my present condition, Sir—

DOUCIN.

'Sdeath, my present condition is a more agreeable business, which you will not apply to—

GENEVIVE.

Sir, raillery very often betrays want of wit; men call it into their relief, when they have nothing of sense and argument left to say for themselves; but I hope that is not your case: I therefore expect to hear what provision you have thought of making for one in my unhappy condition; you know I am with child, and that your own reputation is on the hazard with mine.

276 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

*(Mrs. Hab. sen. and Mrs. Hab. jun. come forward.)*

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

I can bear no more. Thou monster in impudence! *(to her)* And thou much greater monster in hypocrisy! an hypocrite to love! to heaven! *(to him)*

DOUCIN.

Death! hell! eternal confusion! discover'd at this juncture! why then the devil has let fly all his malice, and there is not another plague behind.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Yes, Mr. Doucin, there's a conscience left, a dreadful monitor, which, without repentance, and a just attonement, will give you never-ceasing anguish!—Come, Sir, I must confess some hand in this discovery, but I will prove it to you, that good nature and a love of justice, have induc'd me, and not revenge for injuries done to me. *(Mrs. Habberd, sen. and Genivive weeping)* Look there Sir—behold the ruin you have caused! behold the dreadful consequence of deviating from virtuous paths! Are actions, like these, consistent with your character?

DOUCIN.

I must confess I have deserved these reproaches madam, and am sensibly touch'd with the affliction  
which

which my guilt has caused. My future conduct must make ample reparation, which I am determined in. (*to Gen.*) You shall have certain satisfaction for the injury I have done you. Leave the room. (*Exit Gen.*) Those silent tears fill me with the tenderest concern. (*to Mrs. Habberd, sen.*) Words can't express the compunction of heart, the severe remorse I feel for my past actions: Heaven pardon this long abuse of my sacred function! I have liv'd a continued life of error.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Who can be less a friend to any one for having been in an unhappy error? to err is human; and whatever is human, may befall the best of us.

DOUCIN.

Generous woman! those words are healing to a wounded mind: You have set a good example even to your injur'd sister; her forgiveness would confirm my future conduct. I will renounce that function I have too long disgrac'd, and learn true morality. After that, I shall be qualified both to make, and keep the marriage vow; which justice, love, and every power on earth, informs me, should be made to you. (*to Mrs. Habberd, sen.*

*Mrs. HABBERD, sen.*

Then doubts, and fears, and anxious cares, be-  
T 3 gone!



278 *The FORTUNATE PEASANT: Or,*

gone! all ye black thoughts that did corrode my breast! Here enter faith, and confidence, and love!--love, that can't live with jealousy; but dwells with sacred marriage, truth, and mutual honour: But here our thanks are due.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Give me leave to congratulate you both on this happy occasion; this fortunate event has crown'd my wishes—not only to save, but thus regain a sister, and a friend.

*Enter a Servant.*

SERVANT.

A young gentleman, with two ladies, are below, and ask for Mrs. Habberd.

*Mrs. HABBERD, jun.*

Send them up—I left word with Mrs. La Lain to bring De la Villa to me here, when he returned from the president's. Who can the third person be?—Well, Sir---and Madam, (*to her sister and Doucin*) to be no longer serious, after thus audaciously convicting *you* of your failings, with what sort of countenance can I ask your indulgence to *mine*—for (among friends) my whole heart and soul are engaged to that agreeable young fellow.

*Enter*

Enter Ferval and Mrs. LA LAIN.

(Mrs. Habberd, jun. and Ferval salute.)

Mrs. HABBERD, *sen.*

For your sake, sister, I will receive him as a brother; I am cured of those foibles that induc'd me most to be his enemy; in his defence, before the president, he discovered a noble spirit- -I can approve it now.

(*Jacob bows to her.*)

DOUCIN. (to *Jacob.*)

What has passed between us, must be forgot; I am now your friend, and wish you happiness.

Mrs. LA LAIN.

Ay, ay, say you so, then, dear Sir, tack 'em together, which will compleat his good fortune, and make Mrs. Habberd the happiest lady of her age, in the kingdom.

DOUCIN.

This is something severe, (to Mrs. Habberd, jun.) but you have good sense enough to bear the ridicule.

Mrs. LA LAIN.

Bear the ridicule!---can she bear the delight?

T 4

there's

there's the most danger—truly, I should be glad to see any body ridicule me on the like occasion.

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

Indeed, my dear Mrs. Habberd, your present prospect is a situation much to be envied by us widows. O, the delight of being, without sin, as happy as sinners! We devotees, who really want the resolution to be so in earnest, have a different manner of expressing ourselves from any body else. When a wife loves her husband, it is with love she tells him so; but it is with devotion we express it, tho' with a devotion incomparably delicious.

*JACOB.*

Charming devotees!—and that the loveliest of all devotees should be mine!—happy La Villa!

*DOUCIN.*

Happy indeed! thy merit meets its just reward. I must confess, you have from nature every quality that can become the fortune you are going to be blest with; yet, observe me, young man, neither wit, or beauty, wealth or courage, implicitly deserve the world's esteem; they are only in their application, good.

*Mrs. FERVAL.*

Right, Mr. Doucin; but if I have any guess, I  
fear

fear he has no room in his heart, at present, to lay up those good maxims.

DOUCIN.

Well observ'd, madam; then let us forget past follies, and set forward for the land of matrimony.

Our faults are here, as in a mirror shown,  
See how deform'd, and wisely mend your own;  
Unerring reason should correct what's frail,  
Yet, with the wisest, NATURE WILL PREVAIL.

F I N I S.





THE  
SACRIFICE:

OR,

CUPID'S VAGARIES.

A MUSICAL MASK.

THE  
AORITHIC:

OF  
CUPID'S VAGARIES.

A MUSICAL MASK.

---

---

ADVERTISEMENT.

**T**HIS very juvenile performance was written so long ago, that I have forgot from whence it was taken. A few years since it captivated a great Master in Music, which occasioned a revival; but, alas! in this refined, improved age, a very chaste Pastoral Romance could stand no chance of success, but with the juvenile reader.

## Dramatis Personæ.

NEPTUNE.

VENUS.

DIANA.

CUPID.

SABINA.

ZELINDA.

EUPHELIA.

GERON.

MELEBUS.

PHILLIDA.

LUCILLA.

} Part of the Virgins in  
DIANA's Train.

} Two old Shepherds.

} Their Daughters.

*Priests and Shepherds.*

---

THE  
SACRIFICE:  
OR,  
CUPID'S VAGARIES.

---

ACT I.

SCENE, *a beautiful Wood Prospect.*

*A large tree in the middle. A distant view of the sea.*

*Enter GERON, and LUCILLA in man's apparel.*

GERON.

BENEATH the shade of this wide, spreading tree,  
Let us a while enjoy the cooling breeze ;  
Here sit, my child, and let attention wake,  
While I relate thy father's restless fears.

LUCILLA.



LUCILLA.

But, if it please you, first recount the cause,  
Why is this tree to Neptune dedicated ?  
And why am I conceal'd by this disguise ?

GERON.

In former days, where now thou see'st yon pile  
Of noble ruins in destruction lie,  
A stately temple rear'd its awful head,  
Rais'd and devoted to the ocean's god ;  
Where all who ventur'd on the boist'rous main,  
To mighty *Neptune* offer'd sacrifice !  
But soon wild man, by various passions led,  
For sacrifice, committed sacrilege !  
Broke down the altar with unhallow'd hands,  
And brought the lofty building to the ground.  
*Neptune*, at this, enrag'd, unloos'd the winds,  
And caus'd the foaming waves to break their bounds  
As men had broke their vows ! Then ships  
fail'd here,  
Where now sheep feed, and weeds for roses grew.  
At last, our countrymen grew wise too late,  
Mournful, repenting, sought the angry god,  
Who, on conditions, thus appeas'd his wrath ;  
On the last day of five revolving years,  
The fairest, chastest, virgin in the land,  
Deck'd and adorn'd, must to this tree be bound,  
And left an off'ring for great *Neptune's* peace !

LUCILLA.

LUCILLA.

Dear is the peace, bought with such guiltless blood;

GERON.

But, mark me. Then the monster *Agar* comes,  
At whose approach, the seas and vallies roar;  
The frighted fowl to distant regions fly,  
And cattle in the field with terror drop.

LUCILLA.

And she, alas! bound to endure that horror?

GERON.

That horror, and far worse, must she endure.

LUCILLA.

What, doth the monster then devour her?

GERON.

Whether by him devour'd, or else convey'd  
To mighty *Neptune's* arms, or drown'd by both,  
Is not permitted us to know; even  
To conjecture causeth danger. Now, child,  
Here ends my story, and begins my woe. (*weeps.*)

LUCILLA.

My dearest father, why these falling tears?

GERON.

O, had'st thou been less fair, I had been happy!

(sings.)

*If kind nature has endow'd me,  
And the fairest face allow'd me,  
Then, O, why should I repine?  
    Laurels shading,  
    Never fading,  
Will around my temples twine!  
If then fate the victim makes me,  
And to save my country takes me,  
I leave a never-dying fame!  
    Virtue guarded,  
    Is rewarded,  
Virgins will record my name.*

GERON.

In health it is easy to council the sick, but it is hard for the sick to follow wholesome council. Come, let us depart, the day is far spent.

[*Exeunt.*]

*Enter*

CUPID'S VAGARIES. 291

*Enter MELLIBUS and PHILLIDA.*

MELLIBUS.

Come, Phillida, fair Phillida, and I fear me too fair, being my Phillida. Thou know'st the custom of this country, and I the greatness of thy beauty, and both the fierceness of the monster *Agar*, and that to-morrow is the fatal day. Now, as thou art certainly the fairest girl in the land, (and how can it otherwise chuse, being my girl) I fear thou wilt be pitched upon to be given up to this monster:—Thou shalt therefore be disguised, and I will give out that thou art dead.

PHILLIDA.

Dear Father, nature could not make me so fair, as she has made you kind; nor you more kind than me dutiful; whatsoever you command, I will not refuse; but how shall I be disguised?

MELLIBUS.

In man's apparel.

PHILLIDA.

It will neither become my body nor my mind.

U 2

MELLIBUS.

MELLIBUS.

Why, Phillida?

PHILLIDA.

Because, then I must keep company with men, and commit something, perhaps, unseemly for my sex; or else by being with women, be thought more wanton than becomes me. Besides, I shall be asham'd of my short clothes; and so unwarily blab out something by blushing at every thing.

MELLIBUS.

Doubt not, Phillida, since fear makes it necessary, use will make it easy.

PHILLIDA.

(*sings.*)

*Ye rosy blushes haste away,  
That glowing on my cheek betray  
The conscious maid's disguise!  
Each modest grace,  
That decks the face,  
Soft smiles and downcast eyes,  
No more in Phillida be seen;  
Assuming thus a borrow'd mein,  
With bolder steps, and looser air,  
And mix'd with swains, a swain appear!*

MELLIBUS.



CUPID's VAGARIES. 293

MELLIBUS.

Come, come, let us in—thy dress is ready, and when thou art disguised, roam about these woods 'till the time be past, and *Neptune* satisfied.

[*Exeunt.*]

SCENE, *changes to a fine part of a Wood.*

*Enter CUPID, disguised.*

CUPID.

Since I have truanted so long from my mother, I will use some tyranny, and do some mischief in these woods, and that shall be my excuse for running away. I can safely practice under this disguise. I will play such pranks with these nymphs of *Diana*! and while they aim to hit the harmless deer with their arrows, they shall be wounded with mine.

*Enter SABINA.*

Fair nymph, are you stray'd from your company by chance, or do you love solitude?

U 3

SABINA.

SABINA.

These woods are to me so well known that I cannot stray ; and there are none of *Diana's* nymphs, that any one can train either out of their way, or out of their wits.

CUPID.

What is that *Diana*?

SABINA.

A goddess—who knows it not?

CUPID.

What are her nymphs?

SABINA.

Virgins—who thinks it not?

CUPID.

What are their pastimes?

SABINA.

Hunting—who loves it not?

S O N G.

S O N G.

I.

*Who but lazy dreaming knaves,  
That wanton life away,  
Now Bacchus', now Cupid's slaves,  
As either rules the day.*

II.

*Such, when the lovely morning dawns,  
Forbidding idle rest,  
When eccho cheers the painted lawns,  
And fires the hunter's breast.*

III.

*If love usurp his aching heart,  
And bids the wretch despair,  
He strives in sleep to heal the smart,  
And dreaming woes the fair.*

IV.

*But if by powerful wine oppress'd,  
Alternate, Bacchus reigns,  
With aching head he reels to rest,  
And snores away his pains.*

CUPID.

I pray thee, fair virgin, amongst all your sweet troop, is there not one follows that sweet thing call'd Love?

SABINA.

Love! what mean you? what is it?

CUPID.

A heat full of coldness, a sweet full of bitterness, a pain full of pleasantness; it is bred by desire, nurs'd by delight, wean'd by jealousy, kill'd by dissembling, and buried by ingratitude; this is Love, fair lady, will you have any?

SABINA.

If it be nothing else, 'tis but a foolish thing.

CUPID.

Try, and you shall find it a pretty thing.

*(Sabina turns from him.)*

CUPID.

*(sings)*

*Hither turn thee, dearest creature,  
Yield, O, yield to nature's cause;  
Every motion, every feature,  
Must obey her pow'rful laws.*

SABINA.

CUPID'S VAGARIES. 297

SABINA.

Flattering boy !

CUPID.

*(sings again)*

*Mark the songsters in the grove !  
Every tree is full of love !*

SABINA.

Farewel, false, flattering boy. *(Exit disdainfully.)*

CUPID.

But you, and all *Diana's* train, shall know that  
*Cupid* can hit his mark.

S O N G.

*The old and the young I'll subdue,  
And scatter my arrows around ;  
Both homely and fair I'll pursue,  
Each heart shall acknowlege a wound :  
Even Dian's coy, whimsical train,  
Who so long have resisted my sway,  
Shall presently smart with the pain,  
And learn Cupid's laws to obey. [Exit.*

SCENE,



S C E N E, *continues.*

*Enter* LUCILLA.

LUCILLA.

Unhappy Lucilla! O, would the Gods had made me what I seem to be; or that I may safely be what I seem not!—but soft, here comes a pretty youth—I'll learn of him how to behave.

*Enter* PHILLIDA, *in man's apparel.*

PHILLIDA.

I neither like my gait, nor my garments; the one's untoward, the other unfit, and both unseemly; but hush—I am observed.

LUCILLA. *(aside.)*

I perceive that youths are in as great disliking of themselves as we.

PHILLIDA. *(aside.)*

He is a pretty fair youth; he should have been a woman; but because he is not, I am glad I am,  
for

CUPID'S VAGARIES. 299

for now under this habit I shall discover the follies of their sex.

LUCILLA. (aside.)

I would salute him, but that I fear I shall make a curtsy instead of a bow.

PHILLIDA. (aside.)

All the blood in my body would be in my face, if he should ask me (as the wicked question is among men) *are you a maid?*

LUCILLA.

Pray, Sir, shall I crave the favour of your name?

PHILLIDA.

Sir?

LUCILLA.

Sir, I ask'd the favour of your name?

PHILLIDA.

After I have obtained that favour from you, Sir.

LUCILLA.

Lucio.

PHILLIDA.

I am call'd Silvio the constant.

(*A sound of French-horns at a distance, as at sport.*)

*Enter*

300 *The* SACRIFICE; *Or,*

*Enter* DIANA, *follow'd by her Train.*

DIANA.

Well met, fair boy. (*to Phillida.*)

PHILLIDA.

You are deceived, lady.

DIANA.

Why, are you no boy?

PHILLIDA.

No *fair* boy.

DIANA.

Saw you not the deer come this way? He flew  
down the wind, and I fear you have blanch'd him.

PHILLIDA.

Whose deer was it?

SABINA.

*Diana's* deer.

PHILLIDA.

I saw none but my own. (*looking at Lucilla.*)

DIANA.

This youth is wanton—ask the other.

ZELINDA.

CUPID'S VAGARIES. 301

ZELINDA.

Pretty youth, do your sheep feed in these woods,  
or have you stray'd from your flock? Or on  
purpose come you to marr *Diana's* sport?

LUCILLA.

I understand not one word you say.

ZELINDA.

Why, art thou neither youth nor shepherd?

LUCILLA.

My mother said I could be no youth 'till I was  
twenty, nor keep sheep till I could tell them; and  
therefore, lady, I am neither youth nor shepherd.

SABINA.

These lads are both agreed; either they are very  
arch, or too perverse: You were best, lady, make  
'em tuske these woods, while we stand with our  
bows, and so use 'em as beagles, since they have  
such good mouths.

DIANA.

I will. Follow me both without excuse,  
And chearfully attend *Diana's* sports.

SONG.

S O N G.

Accompanied by French-horns.

*The horn's solemn sound shall alarm,  
 And fill every valley around;  
 Each bill shall re-echo the charm,  
 And the stag shall be rous'd for the wound.  
 Over hill, over dale, as he flies,  
 We pursue 'till he yields up his breath;  
 For the chase is not clos'd till he dies,  
 And my virgins come in at the death.*

(During Diana's song, her nymphs are coquetting  
 with Lucilla and Phillida.)

(After the song Diana goes off with all her train.)

LUCILLA



## CUPID'S VAGARIES. 303

LUCILLA *and* PHILLIDA, *remain.*

LUCILLA.

Well, Silvio, we must follow, *Diana* will protect us.

PHILLIDA.

Protect us ! from what ? She will have a hard task to protect our chastity, if her nymphs continue thus wanton. Why, Lucio, what did they do to you, besides pulling you about ? They brought all the blood in your body into your fair face ! Why did you blush so ?

LUCILLA.

I thought them intolerably bold for virgins ; but pray why did you blush, Silvio ? You have more spirit than I have, and are a better match for them.

PHILLIDA.

Not much better, if the truth were known.

S O N G.

S O N G.

*For every heart,  
I'll find a dart,  
With raptures I'll adore;  
All arts I'll try,  
I'll swear, I'll lie,  
I'll sigh, I'll die,  
What can a man do more?*

LUCILLA.

What, Sylvio, can you be a rake, and inconstant?

PHILLIDA.

I do but jest, Lucio, I am at bottom a very cheat;  
but Diana's commands are upon us, we must obey.

[*Exeunt.*

*Enter*

*Enter* SABINA.

SABINA.

What is the matter with me I cannot tell, I feel an unusual fluttering in my heart—sure it can't be love! O, Silvio, thou art exceeding fair; but because he is fair, must I be fickle? Fond, foolish girl, that I am to think of love.—O, here comes Zelinda—I must think on my folly and blush, lest she perceive my disorder and laugh.

*Enter* ZELINDA.

ZELINDA.

Sabina—*Diana* bid me seek you out. She says you care not to hunt with her: But if you follow any other game, she hath declar'd your punishment shall be to weave all our strings, and bend all our bows—why do you look so sad, so pale, so wildly?

SABINA.

Zelinda, the game I follow is the thing I fly: My strange disease, is my chief desire.

ZELINDA.

I am no *Œdipus* to expound riddles: But pray, Sabina, tell me your complaint: If you be sick,

Vol. II.

X

this

this wood hath herbs to cure. If melancholy, here are sports to use: If peevish, wit must wean it, or time, or council.—But if you are in love—why do you blush so, Sabina?

SABINA.

To hear you, in artfully searching for my disease, so wickedly to recite your own. I saw, Zelinda, how amourosly you toy'd with the fair youth in white.

ZELINDA.

To deal fairly with you, Sabina, I must confess that I am in love; and yet, at the same time, swear, that I know not what it is. I feel my thoughts unknit, my eyes unstaid, my heart I know not how affected, or infected.

SABINA.

Such are my passions, Zelinda, my intolerable passions, which it were best to acknowlege, and crave council.

ZELINDA.

How did it take you first, Sabina?

SABINA.

By the eyes—my wanton eyes caught the dear image of his face, and hung it on the very strings of my heart. O, fair Silvio! O, fond Sabina!

ZELINDA.

CUPID'S VAGARIES. 307

ZELINDA.

Soft—here comes Euphelia—let us withdraw,  
and observe her. *(both retire.)*

*Enter* EUPHELIA.

EUPHELIA.

I am sent to seek others, that have lost myself.

ZELINDA. *(aside.)*

So—Euphelia has bitten on this love-leaf.

EUPHELIA.

Can there be no heart so chaste, but love can  
und? nor vows so holy, but love can violate?  
in art thou, virtue, and chastity is but an empty  
rd, if both are subject to love: But surely  
ers may be virtuous?

SABINA.

Indeed, Euphelia, if lovers may not be virtuous,  
are in a fair way to be vicious.

EUPHELIA.

What, were you so near me?

ZELINDA.

think we were near you, when you said you

X 2

SABINA!



SABINA.

Come, Euphelia, 'tis too late to recall it, and shame to repent it, therefore, prithee, tell us what love is?

EUPHELIA.

What, hast thou look'd on Silvio's eyes, know not what it is?—but more of this as we w  
*Diana* is angry, for by sending one to seek another she looses all. *Servia*, of all her nymphs the comeliest loves deadly; *Clemene* exclaims against *Vesta*, honours *Venus*: Myself (with blushes I must confess it) am enthrall'd with that youth, that fair youth, that too modest Silvio.

SABINA.

What, are we both in love with Silvio?

ZELINDA.

I die for Lucio—but come let us search for these fair destroyers of our peace.

EUPHELIA.

They are wandering hereabouts alone.

ZELINDA.

Didn't they leave us uncivilly, Sabina?

SC

SCENE, *changes to another part of the Wood.*

LUCILLA and PHILLIDA *discovered.*

LUCILLA.

It is a pity nature made you not a woman,  
having a face so fair, so lovely a countenance, and  
so modest a behaviour.

PHILLIDA.

They say there is a tree in Tylos, whose nuts  
have shells like fire, and being crack'd, the kernel  
is but water.

LUCILLA.

What a trifler are you to tell me of that tree?  
May it's pity you are not a woman.

PHILLIDA.

I would not wish to be a woman, unless it were  
because you are a man.

LUCILLA.

Indeed, Silvio, to confess the truth, I would  
not wish you chang'd; for I design never to love  
a woman.

X 3

PHILLIDA.

PHILLIDA.

That's strange. (*pausing.*) Will you give me leave to ask one question, without offence?

LUCILLA.

Will you answer me another, without excuse?

PHILLIDA.

Who do you love best in the world?

LUCILLA.

That that's likest you, Silvio.

PHILLIDA.

That's my picture.

LUCILLA.

Now for my question: Pray has your father e'er a son living?

PHILLIDA.

I did not promise you an answer.

LUCILLA.

You promised me, in the grove, that you would love me before all *Diana's* nymphs.

PHILLIDA.

That is, if you would love me before all *Diana's* nymphs.

LUCILLA

CUPID'S VAGARIES. 311

LUCILLA.

Can you prefer a fond youth, as I am, before  
such pretty nymphs?

PHILLIDA.

Why you have said, nay swore, that you loved  
me better; and pray why should not I love you  
as much?

*Enter* SABINA, ZELINDA, and EUPHELIA.

SABINA. (*aside.*)

Here they are!

ZELINDA. (*aside.*)

And alone.

EUPHELIA. (*aside.*)

And seem to desire no other company.

PHILLIDA. (*aside.*)

We are beset again.

LUCILLA. (*aside.*)

We are haunted by these nymphs.

PHILLIDA.

Pray, ladies, is not this the day for solemn  
sacrifice? the fatal day to beauty?

X 4

LUCILLA.

LUCILLA.

If the sacrifice is not yet chosen, are you not in danger, ladies?

SABINA.

No. *Diana* hath hitherto protected her own train.

PHILLIDA. (*aside to Lucilla.*)

Their homely faces is protection enough.

LUCILLA.

I wonder what virgin the people will present.

PHILLIDA.

It's happy you are not one, Lucio—It would certainly have fallen to your lot, because you are so fair.

LUCILLA.

But then, if you had been a maid too, I need not have fear'd, because you are fairer. Will you be at the sacrifice?

PHILLIDA.

No.

LUCILLA.

Why?

PHILLIDA.

## CUPID'S VAGARIES. 313

PHILLIDA.

Because I dream'd that if I were there, I should  
be turn'd into a female; and then, being so fair,  
as you say I am, perhaps I might suffer for it.

LUCILLA.

Come, let us leave these nymphs, and wander  
in the woods, 'till the fatal hour is past, and then  
my fears will be over.

PHILLIDA.

Why, what do you fear?

LUCILLA.

Nothing—but that you love me not.

*(They go out arm in arm.)*

SABINA.

We are despis'd!

ZELINDA.

Neglected!

EUPHELIA.

Forfaken!

SABINA.

Unkind Silvio!

ZELINDA.

Cruel Lucio!

DUETTE



D U E T T E,  
*Between SABINA and ZELINDA.*

SAB. *Revenge! revenge! for slighted love!*

•ZEL. *Pity our fate, ye pow'rs above.*

*O goddess Venus bear!*

SAB. *Cupid direct to wound their hearts,*

*With his surest, sharpest darts;*

ZEL. *Since we his torments bear.*

[Exeunt.

*End of the FIRST ACT.*

A C T II.

SCENE *continues.*

DIANA *followed by her train.*

DIANA.

WHAT! dare ye all your monstrous crimes  
confess?

And are Diana's nymphs in such distress?  
Shall it be said that Love such conquest gains,  
That in my train, not one chaste nymph remains?  
This breach of faith I will revenge severe!  
What! Shall immodest *Venus* triumph here?

S O N G.

*In vain ye boast the virgin fame,  
When each betrays the guilty flame,  
That riots in her heart :  
Winking eyes,  
Smother'd sighs,  
Reveal the inward smart.  
But I'll revenge my slighted power,  
And Cupid shall, within this hour,  
His treacherous snares remove ;  
His bow and darts, and wanton arts,  
Dying looks, and bleeding hearts,  
The whole artillery of Love !*

An

316    *The SACRIFICE; Or,*

An unknown boy, with neither bow, nor crook,  
Ranges these woods—he sleeps by yonder brook;  
I saw him as I pass'd—Go, bring him here.  
If on his shoulder any scar appear,  
'Tis Cupid—Whoe'er he be, go bring him,  
*(The nymphs run out.)*

*Re-enter with CUPID.*

SABINA.

We have brought the disguis'd boy, and have  
found on his shoulder Psyche's burn, and he confesses himself Cupid.

DIANA.

How now, Sir; are you caught? are you  
*Cupid?*

CUPID.

You see, *Diana*, I dare own my name.

DIANA.

And thou shalt see *Diana* constant proves,  
And still abhors thy mother's wanton loves.  
What did she send you here disguis'd, to range  
Amongst my nymphs, to cause this monstrous  
change?

Does she add craft to malice? Must there be  
No nymphs, no groves, from usurpation free?

For

CUPID'S VAGARIES. 317

For you, her wicked instrument of woe,  
Here nymphs, come, break his arrows, break his bow!

*(The nymphs seize him, and some break his bow  
and arrows.)*

Here clip his wings, and bind his little hands,  
Then scourge the urchin—these are my commands.

CUPID.

Hear me, *Diana*! hear me! my mother will  
revenge me! I am the darling son of *Venus*!

DIANA.

But now thou art *Diana's* slave. [Exit.

SABINA.

We'll plague you, malicious *Cupid*.

ZELINDA.

I'll shew him no mercy.

EUPHROSIA

Nor I.

SABINA.

Nor I.

*(They hurry him off.)*

SCENE

SCENE *changes to the first view of the Wood.*

( *A soft symphony of Flutes is heard.* )

VENUS, *descends in a chariot drawn by doves.*

VENUS, *comes forward.*

Above no peace my restless thoughts enjoy,  
Venus, too long, has lost her darling boy.

S O N G.

*The regal state, the splendid crown,*

*Can they due blessings give?*

'Tis Venus sends the rapture down!

'Tis they that LOVE, that LIVE.

*My darling son must pierce the heart,*

*That wou'd be truly blest;*

*They that enjoy the pleasing smart,*

*True Lovers stand confest.*

(After the song she goes out.)

A

*A Proceſſion for the Sea God.*

*Enter NEPTUNE.*

NEPTUNE.

In vain, fond ſhepherds, *Neptune*, wou'd deceive !  
Who will the vows of faithleſs men believe ?  
In vain your virgins wear a weak diſguiſe,  
They will too late repent—too late be wiſe.

S O N G.

*Rage and revenge inſpire my breaſt,  
Men ſlight all vows, when not diſtreſs'd.  
Again the angry ſeas ſhall roar,  
And on their lands a deluge pour.*

*Enter DIANA.*

DIANA.

O mighty *Neptune* calm thy angry brow,  
An injur'd goddeſs aſks thy favour now :  
No more let virgins ſtain thy hallow'd ground ;  
Nor to the tree the fated fair be bound :  
To *chaſtity* alone let praiſe be given,  
For *virtue* is the chiefſt care of Heaven.

*Enter*



*Enter VENUS.*

VENUS.

Great, mighty *Neptune*, treat her with disdain!  
'Tis *Venus* sues, who never sued in vain.  
Cupid, my lovely boy, by her detain'd,  
In servile bondage has her slave remain'd;  
His bow and arrows are in pieces broke;  
His little back has bore the cruel stroke:  
None but the foes of Love can cruel be,  
And chaste *Diana* boasts that cruelty. (*scornfully.*)

NEPTUNE.

Amazement and disorder fill my face,  
To see you both contending in this place,  
And at this time—What does *Diana* say?  
Have you made *Cupid* captive?

DIANA.

Yes, 'tis true;  
I have him, *Venus*, and will keep him too;  
'Till he, or you, have restitution made,  
To all my virgins whom his wiles betray'd.

VENUS.

This is *Diana*, stranger to delights!  
Unmov'd when beauty calls, and Love invites;

CUPID'S VAGARIES. 321

The sweets of life, by her, are all deny'd,  
And stubborn *chastity* is all her pride!

(*scornfully.*)

NEPTUNE.

This weak contention, goddesses, forbear;  
To both I yield—and thus my will declare:  
Honour and praise is to *Diana* due,  
But *Venus* I must love.

Cupid restore to *Venus*, I advise,      (*To Diana.*)  
And I release the virgin sacrifice.

DIANA.

Blest choice! kind *Neptune*! happy hour!  
Were twenty Cupids now within my power,  
I'd give 'em all, one virgin's life to save,  
Or these lov'd woods——  
Unbind the captive—Cupid hither bring.

(*A nymph goes out.*)

Vol. II.

Y

SONG.

S O N G.

I.

*All hail to this delightful shade !  
Great Neptune frees the votive maid,  
And cheers the virgin train !  
The virgin train shall I O sing,  
In honour of the ocean's king,  
And bless his bounteous reign !*

II.

*Venus shall, in her turn, be pleas'd,  
Her darling boy shall be releas'd,  
To charm her longing eyes.*

*(The nymph returns with Cupid)  
Here take the wanton wanderer ;  
Restore to me the trembling fair,  
Who boasts the nobler prize ?*

VENUS.

CUPID'S VAGARIES. 323.

VENUS. (*embracing Cupid.*)

My lovely Cupid, most unlucky boy !  
Why will you thus thy mother's peace destroy ?  
Have you forgot my grief, when last you stray'd ?  
And how releas'd, when Sappho's captive made ?

CUPID.

Coming through these woods, mamma, and  
seeing so many fair faces, with fond hearts, I  
thought, for my sport, to make 'em smart, and so  
was taken by Diana.

VENUS.

Alas ! thy wings are clipt, thy quiver lost.

CUPID.

But *Vulcan*, mamma, at your request, will  
make me new arrows, and then I'll be reveng'd.

DIANA.

The chaste defies the level of thy bow.

CUPID.

do they—but beauty is a fair mark to hit.

(*Shouts are heard without. Fifes and Tabor,  
at a distance.*)

*The*

324 *The* SACRIFICE; Or,

*The Procession returning with the intended  
Virgin Sacrifice.*

*Enter GERON, MELEBUS, PHILLIDA,  
LUCILLA, &c. &c.*

*The Priests present GERON and MELEBUS, who kneel*

NEPTUNE.

Who are these?

PRIEST.

Those that have offended thee, great Neptune,  
to save their daughters.

NEPTUNE.

Your monstrous crimes for ample vengeance call.

VENUS.

When mighty Love disturbs great Neptune's  
breast.

Venus shall try her arts to give him rest.

CUPID'S VAGARIES. 325

DIANA.

*Diana's nymphs shall Neptune's fame display,  
And virgins celebrate this happy day.*

SONG, by NEPTUNE.

*'Tis mine—the foam besilver'd seas,  
Wafted by the gentle breeze :  
Let the Neriads of the main,  
Sing aloud this choral strain :*

*“ DIANA is by all approv'd,  
“ And VENUS reigns by all belov'd.”*

(Neptune goes off.)

Y 3

GERON.



326 *The* SACRIFICE: *Or,*

GERON. *(embracing Lucilla.)*

My dear Lucilla!

MELEBUS. *(embracing Phillida.)*

My fair Phillida!

LUCILLA.

Unfortunate Lucilla, if this is Phillida!

PHILLIDA.

Unhappy Phillida, if that's Lucilla!

GERON.

What, do you both, being females, love each other?

LUCILLA.

I thought the habit agreeable with the sex.

PHILLIDA.

I thought that in the appearance of so sweet a youth, there could not lodge the body of a foolish virgin.

GERON.

But now you must leave these fond affections; nature will have it so.

LUCILLA.

I will never love any but Phillida.

PHILLIDA

CUPID'S VAGARIES. 327

PHILLIDA.

Nor I any but Lucilla.

MELEBUS.

Adsheartlikins, I shall swear presently—why what an idle choice is this? strange and foolish for one wench to dote on another—to imagine a constant love, where there can be no substantial cause of affection.

DIANA.

What says the goddess of this idle flame?

*(Scornfully to Venus.)*

VENUS.

Say, is your loves unspotted, chaste, and free?  
An artless love, and built on constancy?

PHILLIDA.

I wish myself a man, for Lucilla's sake.

LUCILLA.

And I, for Phillida's.

DIANA.

Suppose all this---what, Venus, can'st thou do?

VENUS.

Remember what to Iphis, Venus wrought;  
What to Panthea---doubt not then my power.

Y 4

PHILLIDA.

PHILLIDA.

I am content.

LUCILLA.

And so am I.

MELEBUS.

But soft, daughter—what is transformation going forward? You should ask my leave if I would have a son.

VENUS.

No more---agree before it is too late,  
Or both your daughters shall endure worse fate.

MELEBUS. (*aside to Geron*)

Brother Geron, if transformation be so easy a thing, I wish Venus would make my wife a man.

GERON.

Come, Melebus, let us refer it to Venus, she is a kind goddess, and will make true lovers happy.

MELEBUS.

Well, I am content.

VENUS.

Virgins, retire within that shady bower;  
Receive the merits of a faithful love.

PHILLIDA.

Come, Lucilla—does not your heart begin to fail you?

LUCILLA.

CUPID'S VAGARIES. 329

LUCILLA.

No, Phillida. *(they retire into the bower.)*

VENUS.

Their happy destiny shall thus be fix'd:—  
Their virgin loves shall into friendship turn;  
So I ordain; and to yon bower have brought  
Their former lovers, swains of equal worth,  
Who will reward their love with constancy.

S O N G.

*Once more let harmony unite,  
The fountain from whence flows delight:  
Both sexes now be blith and gay,  
Love reigns with universal sway.*

*(After the song, she enters her chariot with  
Cupid, and ascends.)*

DIANA.

DIANA.

Ye nymphs and swains your harmless sports  
prepare ;  
Let none, henceforth, the face of sorrow wear :  
*Venus* and *Cupid* now ascend the skies,  
And *Neptune* has releas'd the Sacrifice !

*(Diana goes off with her train.*

*PHILLIDA and LUCILLA return with two  
swains, their former lovers.*

*MELEBUS and GERON meeting them.*

MELEBUS.

Adfheartlikins, I am transported—thou art not  
transformed, and I am exceedingly transported—  
Joy, joy, my good lads and lasses !---Ay, why this  
is right---this will do---Adod there will be rare  
sport now---I shall have Phillidas and grandfons in  
abundance---but come, come, neighbours, since  
the goddesfes have all left us, let us have some  
merry mortal company----the fifes and tabours are  
here,

## CUPID's VAGARIES. 331

here, adod we'll have a dance---but now I think on't, brother Geron, you and I are something too old---we shall only spoil sport---therefore we'll sit and see them trip it.

*A grand rural DANCE.*

END OF THE SECOND VOLUME.



WEDNESDAY VACATION

1891  
1892  
1893  
1894  
1895  
1896  
1897  
1898  
1899  
1900  
1901  
1902  
1903  
1904  
1905  
1906  
1907  
1908  
1909  
1910  
1911  
1912  
1913  
1914  
1915  
1916  
1917  
1918  
1919  
1920  
1921  
1922  
1923  
1924  
1925  
1926  
1927  
1928  
1929  
1930  
1931  
1932  
1933  
1934  
1935  
1936  
1937  
1938  
1939  
1940  
1941  
1942  
1943  
1944  
1945  
1946  
1947  
1948  
1949  
1950  
1951  
1952  
1953  
1954  
1955  
1956  
1957  
1958  
1959  
1960  
1961  
1962  
1963  
1964  
1965  
1966  
1967  
1968  
1969  
1970  
1971  
1972  
1973  
1974  
1975  
1976  
1977  
1978  
1979  
1980  
1981  
1982  
1983  
1984  
1985  
1986  
1987  
1988  
1989  
1990  
1991  
1992  
1993  
1994  
1995  
1996  
1997  
1998  
1999  
2000  
2001  
2002  
2003  
2004  
2005  
2006  
2007  
2008  
2009  
2010  
2011  
2012  
2013  
2014  
2015  
2016  
2017  
2018  
2019  
2020  
2021  
2022  
2023  
2024  
2025  
2026  
2027  
2028  
2029  
2030  
2031  
2032  
2033  
2034  
2035  
2036  
2037  
2038  
2039  
2040  
2041  
2042  
2043  
2044  
2045  
2046  
2047  
2048  
2049  
2050  
2051  
2052  
2053  
2054  
2055  
2056  
2057  
2058  
2059  
2060  
2061  
2062  
2063  
2064  
2065  
2066  
2067  
2068  
2069  
2070  
2071  
2072  
2073  
2074  
2075  
2076  
2077  
2078  
2079  
2080  
2081  
2082  
2083  
2084  
2085  
2086  
2087  
2088  
2089  
2090  
2091  
2092  
2093  
2094  
2095  
2096  
2097  
2098  
2099  
2100